



# 솔로플레이의제왕

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## EMPEROR OF SOLO PLAY

BOOK 02

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# Emperor of Solo Play

(솔플의 제왕)

by

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# Synopsis

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Year 2035.

The virtual reality game, Warlord, changed the world.

An Jaehyun was one of the many who wished to change his life through the game.

After dedicating his life to the game, he was met with a betrayal.

A betrayal by his comrades.

As a result, he lost everything.

But a chance was given to him.

A chance to redo everything again!

“I won’t play with others ever again. Whatever the outcome, I’ll show that I can do it alone.”

Others rolled a die to split the spoils of victory.

An Jaehyun ate it all by himself.



It was the start of An Jaehyun's solo game life.



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# Chapter 101 – Guerrillas (1)

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It was large and bizarre looking... The trees looked like ghosts with its arms wide open, and it looked as if they were letting out a scream. The dense forest itself was giving off an ominous vibe.

There were thick blue fog that was layered in between the tree. It was foreboding instead of being creepy.

It wasn't desirable to battle in such a bleak forest. Moreover, the monsters made this place much more undesirable. It was a monster with a lower body of a lion, upper body of an orc, and the head of a goat.

Moreover, the monster was holding a very rusty halberd. The combination of spear and battle-ax would immediately make the weak turn their head away.

However, these factors didn't have affect the group that was facing off against this monster.

Hoo-oohng!

It was a Cursed monster. The monster was named Voodoo Chimera, and its attack was fierce. A powerful power was being emitted by its bizarre body, and it used this power to swing its Halberd. The Halberd didn't just slice through the air. It ripped through the air.



Kwahng, kwahng!

Every time the terrifying attacks came down against the shield, the sound of the impact made the bluish fog retreat in fright. That was how frightening the blows were.

Koo-uh! Koo-uh!

Moreover, the Voodoo Chimera let out a most peculiar shout as it delivered each strike. It sounded as if the Curse had manifested in its shout. If one went by the sounds of the battle, the Voodoo Chimera sounded as if it was overwhelming its opponent.

However, the eyes showed a slightly different result.

“It’s overflowing with strength.”

He was wearing a black armor that could be called a little bit too sturdy. He stood in front of the Voodoo Chimera’s attack with a large black shield, and the Tanker wasn’t being pushed back an inch. He was calmly blocking the reckless attacks with his shield.

This wasn’t the only thing he was doing.

As he was blocking the attack, he was moving. He was slowly baiting the Voodoo Chimera into a position he wanted. His skill was amazing. The sight reminded one of an expert dancer teaching a student the steps to a dance.



He was quite good.

The only thing better was the Magician's skills.

“Hang on a little bit longer.”

While the Tanker was occupying the monster, the Magician finished his Casting, and he threw a fireball.

The fireball was the size of a person's body, and it floated in the air like a balloon. The Magician lightly moved his hand around, and the fire balloon followed the movement of his hand. The fire balloon arrived on top of the Voodoo Chimera's head, and it twitched as if it was getting ready to burst.

At the same time, the Magician invoked a new magic with his other hand. Unlike the magic from before, it was quite intuitive as to how he would use this magic.

Fire Spear!

It was 5 meters long, and the design was like any other normal spear. It was simple.

The Magician threw the Flame Spear as if he was throwing a javelin. It wasn't hard to hit the target. The experienced Tanker's skill gave the Magician the perfect opportunity to hit it on the



back. It was like throwing at a dart board. The only thing the Magician had to worry about was how many times he wanted to hit the monster. That was it.

Shoong!

The Fire Spear headed rapidly towards the Voodoo Chimera's spine.

Right before the Fire Spear could land, the Magician clenched the fist that had been controlling the Fire Balloon. He timed it perfectly.

The twitching fireball finally revealed its true nature.

Poo-hwaht!

An enormous Fire Snake unfurled from the fireball. The Fire Snake appeared with its mouth wide open, and it descended with the intent of biting off the Chimera's head.

Duhp-suhk!

The Fire Snake bit the Voodoo Chimera's head.

Poo-hwaht!



The Fire Spear immediately impacted the Voodoo Chimera's back. The Magician didn't end it there. He immediately used both hands to summon as many Fire Arrows as possible, and he launched it all at the same time.

He was skilled enough to manage three magic spells in a single attack. It wasn't an easy thing to do. If one wanted to be a great Magician, it was a level of skill one would need to possess.

When most monsters were hit with magic, they prioritized their attacks on the Magician. The aggro was pulled towards the Magician. This couldn't be helped. If it was inevitable, the Magician had to let out as many Magic on the monster as possible!

The Voodoo Chimera suffered from the magical attack, yet it was still alive. It immediately charged towards the Magician as it burned like a torch.

“Oh-ooh!”

The Magician had a strange smile as he saw the monster charge towards him. There was no fear on his face.

When there was a distance of about 10 meters between the Magician and the Voodoo Chimera, the Striker stepped forward. The Striker had been on standby as she waited for the monster to close the distance.

Poo-oohk!



The hidden striker was a female User. As befitting a female User, she was wearing a stylish yet casual armor. There was a good mix of silver and black colored armors. She didn't have her helm on. It seemed she had taken off the helm on purpose to boast her long red-tinged hair.

In Warlord, Users like her were categorized as Users, who only cared about their outside appearance. The head was the most important part of the body, yet they refused to protect it. These were idiots, who were drunk on their own self worth.

However, this female User was too skilled to be put in the same category as those idiots. The Voodoo Chimera was charging at a speed comparable to a speeding car on the highway. She had ambushed it, yet she was accurate with her strike. This wasn't an easy feat. This was a bit of an exaggeration, but it was like striking down an arrow in flight.

Moreover, the female User was using the Rush skill to move at high speeds. It was common sense that a speeding car was harder to steer.

When she combined the Rush with her Lightning Strike, the Striker's sword was easily able to pierce through the thick hide of the Voodoo Chimera. Moreover, she was able to create a large wound around the region where she had stabbed. It looked like a wound made by a drill.

Koo-uh-uh!



The Voodoo Chimera let out a horrible shriek as it was sent flying.

The Magician shook his head from side to side as he observed the car crash that had occurred in front of him.

If his comrade was lacking in ability or she made a mistake, the Magician would be the one on the floor instead of the Voodoo Chimera.

Despite all of that, he was relaxed instead of being taken aback. He spoke towards the Striker.

“You aren’t wearing your helm again, Lily?”

“Whatever.”

“You’ll die someday from having your head crushed. I’ll have to get a footage of you getting your head crushed in the future.”

“You want to die?”

“Hey. The Voodoo Chimera is getting up.”

It was a level 140 monster, yet these Users were relaxed with the Voodoo Chimera in front of them.



It was the Noopy Family.

Their average level was 155. Their levels weren't enough to break into the top 100 Ranking, but they were semi-Rankers. They maintained the difference of 10 levels between the top 100 Rankers. They were a 4 man veteran party, who were active since the start of Warlord.

The Noopy family focused on regular hunts instead of Raids. Their ability to conduct a Raid was lacking, but on the other hand, they were comparable to the members of the 30 great guilds in their ability to take down the mid-sized monsters. In fact, they were reputed to be better than the 30 guilds. This was how exceptional these players were. If the 30 great guilds increased their proficiency in clearing raids, the Noopy family increased their proficiency in taking down the normal monsters.

At that moment, the Priest spoke.

“An Evil Eye is heading towards us. Hurry up and wrap this up.”

The expression of the members immediately changed when they heard those words. The Tanker once again engaged the Voodoo Chimera, and the Magician started casting his magic. The Striker moved towards a suitable location.

While all of this was going on, short conversations were shared between the group.



“Evil Eyes. We can’t stack points, because of those bastards. Whenever we start getting on a roll, those bastards shows up....”

“When will we get the Quest that will allow us to catch those bastards? We’ve already spent one week here.”

“I’ve heard from someone else that someone has to reach a predetermined amount of points to acquire the Quest.”

“Really? What’s our current Point Ranking?”

“Fourth.”

“Then it won’t be possible for us to do it.”

“We can’t do it.”

When they were sharing this conversation, all four users immediately thought of one User.

“There’s the Hahoe Mask.”

“Let’s just pray the Hahoe Mask reaches the required Points. He’s already far ahead in 1st place.”

“Let’s aim for the 2nd place instead of the 1st. I’m pretty sure the



Reward is determined by the Point Rankings.”

After saying those words, they once again focused on their battle.

When the Cursed Domain opened, several rumors started to spread.

The source of today’s rumor was an NPC.

“You did well today. If I combine the result of your hunt, it is worth 150 points.”

The User made a sour expression at Sarabo’s words.

“I caught a big one, yet it is worth only 175 points?”

“It isn’t a big catch. It just looks like a big catch.”

It was the Red Beard Sarabo.

As the name indicated, he was a man with a big red beard. He was 190 cm tall with a robust body, and he always had a sword equipped on each hip. The NPC was skilled enough to easily take down the normal Users.

Moreover, amongst the numerous NPCs in Warlord, he wasn’t top 10 in recognizability, but he was within the top 20.



Sarabo appeared soon after the Block Field was released, and he made a temporary town. From the temporary town, he took on the role of handing out Quests to the Users.

Basically, he was an Event NPC!

Of course, the Users were quick to catch on about this fact. The appearance of Sarabo meant the Cursed Domain was a stage for an Event! It was understandable why all these baseless rumors cropped up from his appearance.

The Quest content given by Sarabo was quite simple.

“This place is the Cursed Domain. The barrier had sealed this place up until now, but the power of the barrier was finally spent. Now this place is disclosed to the public. This was why the Subjugation Association is planning on purifying the Cursed Domain. Currently, the Domain has been taken over by the Voodoo Chimeras. Those bastards aren’t particularly strong, but there are mutated version of the monster, who can use a special Skill named Evil Eye. The Subjugation Association has no idea how to deal with them. This might be obvious, but the person who kills the most Voodoo Chimera will get a reward befitting the number of kills.”

One didn’t have to be smart to understand the content. If one enjoyed playing Warlord, it was a simple content that could be understood in an instant.



One had to avoid any engagement with the Evil Eyes, and it was basically a start to a competition to see, who could catch the most Voodoo Chimeras.

Moreover, the famous parties in Warlord had converged on this location. The users above level 140, who conducted regular party hunting instead of Raiding to raise their levels, appeared in droves. The Users from the Underfoot guilds, and the 30 great guilds came too. However, these Users weren't members of the front line group of these guilds. They had time to spare in their schedule. Also, Rankers with their names up in the Rankings showed up.

This was the war between stars.

Amongst the battle between stars, there was a main character, whose name shone the brightest.

Kwahng!

The Enormous Stone Axe cut the Voodoo Chimera's body in half. The axe was wielded by the Minotaur Golem.

Poo-oohk!

The Skeleton Knight mercilessly stabbed the fallen Voodoo Chimera with its sword. It was equipped with a really expensive Unique defensive gear, and it wielded the incredibly expensive Golden Mantis Scythe Sword.



Poohk, poohk!

Two Skeleton Warriors wearing various Rare and Unique Rank Items were also participating in the battle. They were surrounded by the Bone Armor, and a horn was grown on top of their helmeted head.

Poo-hwaht!

The User's appearance was very simple in design. He was equipped with a one-of-a-kind Chronicle Unique Item named Ivan's Sword. He swung the sword to dice up the Voodoo Chimera's body.

It was the Hahoe Mask.

He was the Cursed Domain's brightest star.

[Your Level has increased.]

[The Skeleton Science Rank has increased to Rank A.]

[Golem Summon skill has increased to Rank A.]

[Skeleton Knight Skill has increased to Rank D.]

[You've acquired the Title 'Butcher of Voodoo Chimeras']

‘This was like eating honey. Honey!’



He leveled up, acquired a Title and his Skills got a Rank Up!

The three consecutive Announcements would make any Warlord dance in joy. Hyrkan had a big smile on his face.

‘This place is awesome.’

It had been 10 days since he started hunting at the Cursed Domain. Hyrkan was at an advantage at the Cursed Domain compared to any other hunting grounds.

The most important skill needed in the hunt within the Cursed Domain was mobility. One had to kill as many Voodoo Chimeras, while avoiding the mutated Voodoo Chimeras called the Evil Eyes! Mobility was crucial to accomplishing this task.

One of Hyrkan’s best attribute was mobility. If needed, he could unsummon all his forces.

On the other hand, this wasn’t true for a normal party. The Strikers were mobile. However, the Magicians, Tankers and Priests were poor in terms of mobility. Their Strength Stat was too low. The party had to react to problems before it cropped up.

Hyrkan could move even if a problem cropped up. This difference was huge.

However, problems was something that might or might not occur.



It also helped that the Voodoo Chimera was a perfect monster for Hyrkan. The Voodoo Chimeras were strong, but their defense was on the weak side. If one had a User that can tank decently, they were surprisingly easy to kill.

Lastly, they gave a significant amount of EXP. They were level 140 monsters, but the EXP given by the Voodoo Chimeras were close to those of level 150 monsters. Hyrkan's level was still in the 120s, so this was an enormous amount of EXP.

‘This is why they probably cleared this in secret.’

On the other hand, he could understand why the Cursed Domain had been cleared in Secret.

It was a Points Competition Quest. If less people knew about it, wouldn't there be less competitors? Moreover, this Points Competition held at the Cursed Domain wasn't advantageous to the Users, who were good at Raids. It was advantageous for Users, who like to do regular Party hunting.

‘I should be getting close.’

The end to the hunt for points was coming to end soon. Sarabo would probably tell him how he'll be able to hunt the Evil Eyes. Then the Reward will be handed out.

‘What will come out?’



Of course, the biggest reward would be given to the User ranked 1st in the Point Ranking. It would be given to Hyrkan!

‘I want something like a Skill Book. Skill Book!’

Then the day finally arrived.

“I’ve arrived at the Cursed Domain.”

– Already?

A soft green light flowed over the User’s armor. He stopped for a brief moment to answer the reply he heard in his ears. He looked at the sight that was in front of him.

It was a very ominous forest.

The User opened his mouth after he looked at the forest for a brief moment.

“I’ll investigate about the Quest first. That is my main mission. If the situation allows it, I’ll eliminate the Hahoe Mask.”

The incoming reply was short.

– All right. Keep up the good work.



“Thanks.”

After the brief conversation, the User wearing the green colored armor disappeared into the blue fog.



## Chapter 102 – Guerrillas (2)

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A temporary town was erected near the Cursed Domain with Sarabo at its center. Most of the Users that had gathered in the town was over level 140.

Of course, most of the Users gathered here had played Warlord since it opened. They were the the inhabitants of Warlord, and they had spent five to six hours a day since the opening day... A good number of the Users experienced fingers being pointed at them in worry by their parents and friends. They would say things like ‘Tsk tsk! Does the game feed you? Will it feed you?’, yet these players continued to play for an inordinate amount of time.

This is why everyone here was well aware of how Warlord worked.

This was why everyone here was guarded rather than being awestruck by Hyrkan. He was someone that had to be kept in check.

‘In the end, the Hahoe Mask got the 1st place.’

‘This makes no sense. To my knowledge, the Hahoe Mask is level 130. There is a 10 level gap between me and him. Moreover, the Hahoe Mask is hunting by himself. How is he able to catch more monster than a 4 man party?’

‘Is the rumor of him being some incredible rich kid true? Did he really spend a million dollar on this game? At the very least, his



Items are Unique Rank, and even his Skeletons are equipped with Unique Items..... That fucking rich bastard. If he wants to flaunt his money, he should do it somewhere else!’

Hyrkan was well aware of how others looked at him.

‘I’ve arrived.’

The attention he got from his surrounding was worrying, but at the same time, it was something long-awaited.

‘I’ve finally caught up to them.’

He had received these kinds of gazes before he had returned to the past. At the time, he needed two years to receive it. Moreover, he wasn’t by himself at the time. He had to attack in droves to barely get the frontrunners to be wary of his party.

His current pace was the only evidence he needed. He had made the right choice.

Everything Hyrkan possessed was invested into this world called Warlord. There was an evidence he wanted to see above all else. He wanted proof that he hadn’t been wrong. This was the only thing that could console Hyrkan, when his heart wavered.

‘I was unexpectedly lucky.’



Truthfully, provocation came alongside these gazes. Aside from the provocation, Hyrkan had experienced a widescale attack before. Hyrkan thought there was a good possibility something bad would happen in the near future. He had hardened his heart.

However, no groups decided to provoke him. They looked at him with dissatisfaction and wariness, but they did nothing.

Hyrkan didn't know the exact reason, but he had his suspicions as to why no one was attacking him.

‘I never expected to benefit, because of the Red Bulls.’

In recent days, Red Bull's guild master Chev had referenced the Hahoe Mask in an official interview.

During the interview, Chev mentioned that the Hahoe Mask's Waltz was the most memorable footage he had seen related to Warlord in recent days. The reporter immediately asked if Chev was acquainted with the Hahoe Mask. As if he had been waiting for the question, Chev gave an answer.

“I don't know him officially. I'll leave it at that.”

When he gave his answer, the discussion online got a little bit more heated.

– The Hahoe Mask is acquainted with the Red Bulls?



– Maybe the Hahoe Mask is Red Bull's hidden ace card?

– Wow. If the Hahoe Mask enters the Red Bulls, wouldn't that trump everything? If the Hahoe Mask enters the frontline Raid team of the Red Bulls, they'll become the strongest in Warlord!

– This is a rumor, but there is a rumor saying they are lovers.

– Aren't they both men?

– This is why it's such a big news.

– There are a lot of crazy people on the top.

Of course, there are cases where weird rumors heated up. Still, the interview was the reason why no one was messing with the Hahoe Mask. They didn't want to offend the Red Bulls.

'He must have really taken a liking to me. Or maybe his Quest progress is going really well, because of the hint I gave him.'

Of course, Chev didn't speak about him for no reason. Chev knew the influence his words possessed.

It had been a form of signal. It was a signal say he wanted a closer relationship with the Hahoe Mask.



From Hyrkan's perspective, this was all very sudden, but he didn't have any reasons reject it.

'I was right in wearing the Mask.'

Hahoe Mask.

In the end, the Hahoe Mask had given him an identity. It gave him a chance to build up his non-existent background.

As a result, there was nothing holding him back now. He was able to finish first in the Voodoo Chimera hunt, and he was able to proudly stand in front of Sarabo as the Point Ranking leader.

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"Good job."

These were the Users, who had been operating out of the temporary town. These were the groups ranked 1st to 4th in the Point Ranking. Sarabo gathered the four groups, and he gave each of them a gem. The red gems were generating light on their own.

"With your help, I was finally able to come up with a method to block the Evil Eye's Curse. The gems I gave you all will block the spread of the Curse."

At that moment, everyone realized what was going on.



‘So this is how the story will progress.’

‘It’ll give a ticket up to the 4th place? This is turning out to be quite interesting.’

‘Basically, the ones with the tickets can receive the quest.’

There had been a lot of talk about the reward given depending on the Point Rankings. There were talks about Sarabo giving a Unique Item or a Skill Book. There were also talks about a reward of over 100,000 gold....

However, those rumors were incorrect.

This gem could block the curse of the Evil Eye! This was the reward. It basically meant a select group of Users could Raid the Evil Eye.

‘Everything up until now was the preliminary rounds.’

‘We are the only ones that can participate in the main round.’

It was a pretty valuable reward. Currently, the Evil Eyes were roaming around the Cursed Domain, and they weren’t allowed to be targeted. When one saw an Evil Eye, the curse activated, and all of one’s Stats suffered a 50% reduction. Moreover, one’s movement speed was decreased by 80%. It was a frightening curse.



If it was a level 200 User, one might be able to overcome it. However, it was impossible for level 150 Users to catch the Evil Eye.

Of course, there was an additional reward for the 1st place User.

“Your contribution was the largest. I’m giving this reward only to you.”

It was the reward.

“What?”

“Use it well.”

“What?”

It was a single coin.

The coin had 1,000 stamped on it.

“T...this is it?”

Hyrkan was genuinely taken aback as he asked the question. Sarabo patted Hyrkan on his shoulder.

“You did well.”



Hyrkan shook when he heard those words.

‘No! Give me an Item instead! Item!’

He never expected the 1st place reward to be a mere 1,000 gold. Of course, 1,000 gold wasn’t a small figure. It was very rare to get more than 1,000 gold as a reward. This was a pretty large reward.

However, Hyrkan had used his Bone Explosives and other resources liberally to get the 1st place in this Quest. He was dumbfounded.

‘Really? Fuck!’

Unbidden cuss words were close to pouring out.

Sarabo lightly brushed off Hyrkan, and it spoke towards the rest of the group.

“The only thing left is to catch the Evil Eye then you have to enter the Cursed Castle. The first one to catch the Evil Eye and arrive at the Castle will be given this sword.”

Took took!

As it was speaking, Sarabo patted the sheath of the sword he wore on his left hip.



“I’ll give this sword as a reward.”

[Quest ‘Evil Eye Hunter’ has started.]

[This is a Conditional Quest.]

The real Quest had just started.

The rumor was spread immediately.

Those ranked 1st to 4th in the Point Ranking could catch the Evil Eyes. The rumor was they had to form a team to hunt down the Evil Eye.

Moreover, the Quest Reward was one of Sarabo’s sword!

The Users that had lost in the points competition hadn’t left. They planned on staying at the Cursed Domain to hunt. Of course, they would be interested in such a Raid, and at the same time, they finished calculating their moves.

‘It’s the Hahoe Mask.’

‘It’ll be most advantageous to be able to team up with the Hahoe Mask.’



Everyone gathered here were experts. They were all very skilled. However, they all had the same obvious weak point. They excelled at regular hunting, but no one here had many experience in fighting the Boss Monster Raids.

Evil Eye wasn't a Boss Monster, but the difficulty was so high that it could be considered to be a Boss Monster.

They needed a User with a lot of Boss Monster Raid experiences. From that perspective, the Hahoe Mask was the best amongst the pieces here.

It was the same for Hyrkan.

‘I can't do this by myself.’

Evil Eye.

If he wanted to kill the monster, he could do it. Currently, there weren't any monsters here that he couldn't catch on his own.

However, he wouldn't be able to catch it faster than his competitors.

‘Shit. I never expected it to be a qualifier. If I knew about it, I would have just aimed for the 4th place!’

It couldn't be helped.



Hyrkan's weakness was quite apparent right now.

It was impossible for him to cause massive damage in a short amount of time.

'I have to get this reward. I've spent a lot of money, so I have to get Sarabo's Sword.'

Armor Breaking.

When one is trying to destroy the target's defensive gear, the User's skill was more important than one's Class Skills. One had to stick to the monster's body, while using a variety of Skills. It wasn't easy. The existence of Skill Cool down was another hindrance. This basically meant there wasn't much difference between Hyrkan and a Sword Class User when it came to Armor Breaking.

However, it was a different when he had to fulfill the role as a damage dealer. For example, let's say there's a level 140 Swordsman, who had advanced to the Fighter class. If this User received a full Buff from a Priest, Hyrkan couldn't come close to the sudden damage the Swordsman could cause using a combination of his three Skills. It didn't matter what methods Hyrkan used.

On the other hand, Hyrkan had the Skeleton Warriors, Skeleton Knight, Skeleton Magicians and the Golem. He was able to deal a constant amount of damage. If one considered the total damage,



Hyrkan was almost on par with a normal Swordsman Class.

‘I have to catch the Evil Eye, and I have to be the first one to reach the castle.’

Anyways, it was important to be able to deal critical damage in a speed run. In a speed run, it wasn't about lessening the HP. It was basically more advantageous to just demolish the monster. For example, if one was fighting a User, it would be better to just cut their throat for an instant Game Over rather than apply constant damage to decrease the HP to 0.

‘There are a total of 5 parties including me.’

Moreover, if one wanted to catch the Evil Eye, one needed a party of around twenty people.

If the 5 parties combined, they would reach close to that number.

Of course, if they did that, it would become a problem as to who would receive the Sarabo's Sword as a reward.

If Hyrkan wanted to keep the Sarabo's Sword, he would have to give the rest of his party members something of equal value.

On the other hand, someone might insist on taking the Sarabo's Sword by paying the requisite price.



‘It isn’t too late to think about this afterwards.’

Of course, the most important thing to do right now was to catch the Evil Eye, and reach the Cursed Domain’s Castle.

‘Let’s catch it first!’

Hyrkan was fired up more so than any time he could remember.

“The armor is off!”

“He succeeded in Armor Break before it moved onto the next Phase! What a crazy son of a bitch!”

Evil Eye.

It was 5 meters tall with armor covering its body. It had the head of a snake, but it had only one enormous eye. Its true appearance was finally revealed to the world.

It had a lower body of an enormous goat, and the upper body of an ogre. Its skin were like rags, and there were signs of the skin being sewn together. On top of all of that, it had an enormous snake’s head, and the single eye was letting out a red light. Its name was well-matched.

Hyrkan quickly came down to the floor after he took off the monster’s armor by himself. The Evil Eye glanced at Hyrkan with



its single eye. However, it didn't chase after him. Three tankers had gotten into a triangular formation, and the Evil Eye's movement had been restricted.

It looked funny seeing 2 meter tall Users blocking the progress of a 5 meter tall monster. However, they had enough power to be able to fend off the Evil Eye.

“The Magicians are ready!”

“Just ignore the phases. Let's just focus on the damage dealing.!”

“Focus on the damage instead of the HP. Let's go for destruction of its body!”

Hyrkan exited the stage, and he caught his breath. A Priest came up to him.

“Do you need a heal?”

Hyrkan shook his head. The Priest looked over Hyrkan's body. Hyrkan's clothes were dirty, but there were no rips. It was evidence that Hyrkan hadn't been hit, while Armor Breaking.

It is said the wounds are a badge of honor on a battlefield, but wounds weren't a badge in Warlord.

It was the opposite. It was a badge of honor to be unhurt like



Hyrkan.

“You are incredible. I’ve never seen anyone, who is better at taking off a monster’s armor.”

Hyrkan flicked his finger instead of replying to the statement.

Ddul-goo-ruhk ddul-goo-ruhk!

When he did so, the Skeleton Magicians on standby started to raise their arms up high. There were 5 Skeleton Magicians wearing red colored robes with gold trims. They held staffs with a black gem mounted on them. Instead of looking cool, they looked expensive.

The Priest let out a bitter laugh as he observed Hyrkan. The Priest realized what was going on.

‘He is almost making me speechless right now.’

The owner did the complicated task of Armor Breaking. The Golem and Skeletons were used to deal damage. Depending on the situation, they were also used as Tankers to divert the attention of the monster.

‘However, there is hard cap to his ability.’

Hyrkan was incredible.



However, at the same time, the Priest could see an obvious weakness.

‘He is over-pacing himself.’

Rest was very important in a Boss Raid.

Boss monster raids were a marathon. It wasn’t a short-distance sprint. One could also characterize it as a relay race. People ran with all their might, but when the baton was handed off, they got to rest. This would allow them to sprint with all their might when their turn came once again.

However, Hyrkan wasn’t like that.

If Hyrkan ran the whole course at this pace, we would be able to achieve an unimaginable record. However, Warlord wasn’t a marathon. There wasn’t a goal line. It was a world where numerous people fought for their Rankings.

‘This isn’t my problem.’

Of course, the Priest didn’t need to worry about Hyrkan’s circumstances right now.

“Then get ready for the next attack.”



The Priest decided to root for Hyrkan to fall over in exhaustion.

After hearing the Priest's words, Hyrkan half-heartedly waved his hand instead of answering him. The Priest left, and Hyrkan regulated his breathing.

After the Hahoe Mask's team caught the Evil Eye, they raced towards the Cursed Castle.

“Do you think we'll get the first place?”

“There is no way someone could have caught it faster than us. Of course, I'm assuming the raid teams of the 30 great guild isn't present.”

“Wow! The Evil Eye Hunter title raised the class-specific stat by 20 points! It's a jackpot.”

“Really?”

The Users, who were running, felt their chests start to fill with happiness. When they reached the castle as the 1st place team, they would receive Sarabo's Sword. Everyone would be able to gain a lot of money.

Everyone's steps were light, because they were happy.

They arrived at near the very run down castle wall of the Cursed



Castle. In a flash, they jumped over the moat, and they climbed over the wall. They used the plentiful cracks to climb up the castle wall. For Warlord Users, this was as easy as running across a flat ground assuming one had a certain amount of Strength.

It happened when they crossed the castle wall.

[You've acquired the Title 'Visitor of the Cursed Castle.']

Everyone acquired the Title at once.

[You've completed the 'Cursed Domain' Quest.]

'Ok.'

Hyrkan had just completed another Main Scenario Quest.

[You've failed in completing the 'Evil Eye Hunter' Quest.]

In conclusion, everyone received an announcement saying they had all failed at completing the Evil Eye Hunter Quest.



“Huh?”

“What the hell?”

They were like actors in an opera. Everyone’s expression crumpled at the same time.

They frowned, because they discovered there were other guests inside the castle.

‘Someone did it faster than us?’

They would have understood it if they had made a mistake in the Evil Eye hunt. However, the Hahoe Mask’s team couldn’t picture a more perfect run. This was especially true since Hyrkan and the Strikers had cut off the Evil Eye’s head when it was about to enter into the 2nd phase. This had decisively reduced their raid time.

However, there had been a party that was faster than them?

Hyrkan also couldn’t help, but be taken aback. He was already pissed off at the 1 thousand gold reward yet he had also lost out on Sarabo’s sword? His insides would hurt for at least a week.

‘Who the hell are those bastards?’

Hyrkan looked on with a poisonous expression. He looked over the group that had caught the Evil Eye before him.



‘The Noopy Family?’

It was the Noopy Family.

It was a group, who had received the Evil Eye’s curse blocking gem alongside Hyrkan.

‘These guys are skilled, but they shouldn’t have been able to do it faster than me.’

Even Hyrkan admitted their skills were exceptional. However, this party didn’t have enough firepower to catch the Evil Eye faster than him.

Hyrkan continued to look at the other members of the group.

Hyrkan’s eyes eventually landed on a User wearing a silver armor, which was surrounded by a green light. He wore a cylindrical Great Helm, and he was talking to the Users around him. He didn’t seem to be a comrade of the other Users. The other Users treated him like a superior.

‘Huk! Is that the Greenstone Imoogi set? Is this for real?’

Greenstone Imoogi.

It was a level 150 Boss monster, and it was very strong. Currently,



it was one of the three most difficult level 150 Boss monster Raids that had been successfully completed.

Moreover, the only Guild that had been able to successfully finish the Raid was the V&V Guild. They were a member of the 30 great guilds.

There was a great amount of worth to this Boss Monster. The ingredients from the Greenstone Imoogi could be used to make a 5 part Unique Item set. When the set option activates, it gave an incredible effect.

‘My god. Why is that thing here?’

When one delivers a critical hit to an enemy, the ‘Imoogi’s Curse’ was cast. The ‘Imoogi’s Curse’ decreased the opponent’s defense by 25%. Moreover, the Imoogi’s Curse can be stacked with other curses.

As the monster’s level increased, the effect of the Imoogi’s Cursed decreased. However, it wasn’t an exaggeration to say this was the best defensive set one could get when going up against monsters below level 150.

On top of all of that, V&V guild was currently monopolizing the Oksan’s Hourglass, where the Imoogi appeared. Any Items related to the Greenstone Imoogi was being monopolized by the V&V guild. The guild had a strict policy of never selling it to anyone outside of the 30 great guilds. The big donors of the V&V guild, and the close allies within the 30 great guilds were the only ones able to



wear the set. It was something one couldn't acquire even if one had the money.

In fact, the Greenstone Immogi's Set options had never been released to the public. He knew it only because he was Hyrkan.

How could such a set be in front of his eyes?

Hyrkan was nervous, and at the same time, he had a hunch.

'This isn't someone, who should be here. Is he a member of the V&V guild?'

A whale lived in the ocean instead of a lake. That was the point. This bastard should be playing in bigger waters than the Cursed Domain, yet he was here. In other words, there was a reason why he had come to the small lake. He didn't come here by mistake.

'What the hell?'

It happened at that moment.

'Uh?'

The unknown User wearing the Greenstone Imoogi met face to face with Hyrkan. They didn't see each other eye to eye. The User wearing the Greenstone Imoogi set had a Great Helm on his head, and it covered his entire face. Hyrkan had his Hahoe Mask and a



hood had been thrown over his head. It wasn't possible for them to see eye to eye.

‘He’s giving me a cold feeling.’

At that moment, Hyrkan thought about the event before he returned to the past....

‘It’s very cold.’

He had glory right in front of his eyes, yet he had fallen due to a nonsensical reason. Those memories flitted through his mind.



## Chapter 103 – Guerrillas (3)

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“How did you guys pull it off?”

There was no butting heads. It wasn't as if there had been some nefarious plot. In the end, they had lost in a fair fight.

Instead of being angered, they were curious. The team with Hyrkan as the centerpiece had pulled off a perfect raid. They had been singing their own praise. However, another party had caught the Evil Eye with a better time? They couldn't believe it.

However, no one gave a straight answer to the question.

“Well, we were just lucky.”

That was it. No one elaborated any further. It was as if they had come to an agreement beforehand. Instead of carrying on the conversation, the members of the party kept eyeing a particular User intermittently as they spoke.

The members with the Hahoe Mask's team observed how the Noopy Family acted. They had a rough idea on what was going on, so they started eyeing the User too.

‘Who is he?’

‘Those Items look extraordinary. What kind of Items are those?’



However, Hyrkan didn't cast side-glances at the User. He outright stared at the User.

'If it's the Greenstone Imoogi set... The level 150 Evil Eye would have been child's play.'

Hyrkan knew about the worth and Option of the other User's Items. Hyrkan immediately pieced together what had happened.

With the Greenstone Imoogi set's effect, Evil Eye wouldn't even be strong as a level 150 mid-boss monster. It would be like an average level 130 boss monster.

Moreover, the Users gathered here all had serious fire power. If they received such a boon, Hyrkan could see how they had killed the Evil Eye faster than his team.

It would have been hilarious and sad if they had been slower than his team.

'If I can equip my Skeleton with one of those....'

Hyrkan coveted the Greenstone Imoogi Set.

The Greenstone Imoogi set's special characteristic was its curse, which activated when a critical hit happened. This would be perfect for a Skeleton Warrior. He could create a Skeleton using



low level monster's bones as ingredients. Then he could equip this set on the Skeleton and use it to specifically cast Curses. It would be very effective. It was no wonder why Hyrkan coveted it.

However, his thoughts regarding the Item ended there.

He was curious as to who his opponent was. He had lost the incredibly valuable Sarabo's Sword, because of him. It made his stomach hurt so much that he felt like dying. He was also dying to have the Greenstone Imoogi set, yet Hyrkan couldn't do anything about it.

It wasn't possible, so that's that.

Moreover, this was the first time Hyrkan had met this User, but it wasn't as if the User was friendly towards him.

If that man was really interested in Hyrkan, he would have approached Hyrkan as a helper. Instead, he had decided to go to Hyrkan's competitor.

‘That bastard came here to fuck me over.’

Hyrkan saw through to the core issue.

If that User wearing the Greenstone Imoogi set wanted to talk, trade or negotiate with Hyrkan, he would have come to Hyrkan first.



However, the User had done the opposite. It was obvious to everyone that he had secretly aligned against Hyrkan. He had basically fucked over Hyrkan, and it meant he had no plans on striking up a friendly relationship with Hyrkan.

‘Since the Quest is done, I have no reason to stick around here.’

The right thing to do was to leave this stage before unnecessary conflict started.

As if it had read Hyrkan’s inner thoughts, Sarabo appeared.

“All of you are marvelous. Good job.”

The distribution of the reward for the Quest started. Sarabo’s Sword was given to the Noopy Family.

“Please show us its Option!”

“Wow. Is it a rare? Or is it a Unique?”

“What’s the level restriction?”

The Users became unsettled. The members of the Noopy Family smiled as they acquired the Item. An amicable yet disordered atmosphere formed inside the Cursed Castle.



However, Hyrkan wasn't part of this atmosphere.

Moreover, the Greenstone Imoogi swordsman Sinclair was gone too.

After leaving the Cursed Castle, Hyrkan ran at full speed. However, his tail closed the distance quickly. A tail had attached himself right after he had left the castle. Hyrkan couldn't shake his tail no matter what. The distance between them kept shrinking.

They were at the center of a forest. The blue fog had receded a little bit, and the person Hyrkan expected appeared.

It was the User, who had been wearing the Green Imoogi set.

‘What the hell?’

.....or not.

‘Bat Marauder set?’

It was an armor made out of reddish black leather. The User was wearing a helmet that made him look like Batman.

‘Amongst the level 100s sets, those Items have the greatest speed Option....’



Bat Marauder set.

It's official name was the Giant Blood Bat set. The Giant Blood Bat was a level 140 rare monster. One had to catch the Giant Blood Bat to be able to make this set, and it had numerous Options regarding to movement speed. Basically, it was an upgraded version of the Shadow Hunting Dog set he had worn before.

Of course, the price and the options wasn't even comparable to the Shadow Hunting Dog set. If the Shadow Hunting Dog set was a Sonata, the Giant Blood Bat set was a Ferrari.

Moreover, the design was similar to Batman's suit, so its nickname was the Bat Marauder set. Basically, it was the Batman set.

‘He has the Greenstone Imoogi and the Bat Maurauder set. The last remaining slot is probably filled with something of similar rank.....’

A Warlord User could fill a total of three slots. This User's two slots were filled with incredible Items, so the last slot was probably filled with something similar. At the very least, he probably filled it with a level 140 Unique Item set.

‘Tsk.’

At that moment, Hyrkan had come to a decision. He opened his



mouth.

“Do you have some kind of business with me?”

“Are you the Hahoe Mask?”

“If I said no, will you believe me?”

At that moment, his opponent manipulated his wrist watch. He had changed his Item Slot. Sinclair had activated his third Item Slot. The look he unveiled was an armor made out of black steel. It looked very sleek, and the helm had the shape of a wolf.

‘He even had the Black Steel Wolf set.’

Black Steel Wolf Set.

Amongst the countless number of Set Items in existence, this was one of the top 10 Items in existence right now.

It was especially famous for its high defense. Amongst the highest level Items, it was famous for its surest defense. It wasn't an exaggeration to say almost no weapon held an advantage over the Black Steel Wolf set.

“I have no personal enmity towards you.”



Hyrkan didn't mince words when his opponent spoke.

“All right. I, the Hahoe Mask, doesn't shy away from fights that come my way.”

Sinclair had come to catch Hyrkan, so he smiled at Hyrkan's words.

‘He is unexpectedly prideful. The probability of him running away isn't high.’

Catch Hyrkan.

This was the order given by the organization Sinclair was part of. Moreover, there was also a bounty on his head.

‘Currently, the Hahoe Mask has a bounty of 50 thousand dollars.’

Hyrkan had a 50 thousand dollar bounty on his head.

This wasn't reality. It was a game, and he had an overwhelming advantage in terms of Spec. He would be earning a lot of money just by killing a User, who was 30 levels below him.

‘The Items that comes out from his Watch is mine.’

Moreover, there would be additional profit he would gain after



killing Hyrkan. It had been agreed that any Items that could be stolen from the Hahoe Mask's wrist watch was his to keep. If his research was correct, Hyrkan was an incredibly rich person, and it was known that he didn't spare any costs in acquiring Items.

'I lost a lot of time, but it seems I'll gain a huge profit here.'

Sinclair started to have happy thoughts.

As if he was trying to break Sinclair's reverie, Hyrkan spoke in a very solemn manner.

"Shall we do the battle off the record? Let us keep no records or footage. How about we bury this battle in our hearts after this?"

At those words, Sinclair stopped his imagination from running away from him. It seemed Hyrkan wanted to talk to him a little bit more.

"I'll be thankful if we did that."

Sinclair decided to humor him.

"Since we are to fight, let's put our lives on the line in no uncertain terms."

'Put our lives on the in no uncertain terms?'



Sinclair was suspicious as to what he was saying, but Hyrkan took off his glove and he cut his wrist with his sword.

Kwahk!

Ivan's Sword immediately sliced deep into Hyrkan's wrist. If he did had brought down the sword about half a dozen times harder, it would have been enough to cut off his own wrist.

Sinclair's expression hardened when he saw the sight.

“What the hell are you doing?”

“What the hell am I doing? Do you not know about the Watchman Style?”

“Watchman?”

Kwahjeek!

He once again brought down his sword on his wrist. A smile could be seen below the Hahoe Mask, and he continued to speak.

“We'll give each others our watch. It is a life and death battle that one cannot avoid. You don't know about it?”

Sinclair thought about it for a brief moment. The Watchman



battle wasn't conducted like this to his knowledge. However, this wasn't something unusual. Warlord was game that catered its service to the world. Depending on where the User was from, the battle styles and trends varied.

It wasn't as if Sinclair knew about everything.

“You sliced your own wrist to give your watch to your enemy. This isn't even funny.”

There was simple reason why one would cut one's wrist to extract a watch. In Warlord, the owner couldn't release one's wrist watch even as the owner. There was only one way to release it. One had to take it off after cutting the watch off the wrist.

It was horrifying, but it made a perverse sense.

He was going to give the watch to his enemy then fight. It was a gesture expressing his will. He was basically saying he'll fight his enemy until he'll be able to recover his watch.

Moreover, he was cutting off his own wrist!

‘It seems he is really determined to go through with this.’

Sinclair looked on in silence as he watched Hyrkan cut his own wrist. It was known that the Hahoe Mask had never experienced his wrist being cut before.



Hyrkan finally severed his wrist, and he took off the watch. He used Body Glue to reattach his wrist. With his reattached hand, he threw his watch.

“Since you don’t know about the Watchman Style, it can’t be helped. You keep it for now. It’ll be mine once again after a couple of minute. It is inevitable.”

After he received the watch, Sinclair’s expression hardened. Something twitched within Sinclair’s heart.

‘Fuck.’

From the time he had started Warlord to now, Sinclair had always been the best. However, his situation didn’t allow him to reveal the fact that he was the best.

If he revealed himself right now, he could become more famous than the guild masters of the 30 great guilds.

In fact, Sinclair was treated like a VVIP by the 30 great guilds. The 30 great guild masters requested communication with him. They asked him for help, and at times, they tried to recruit him.

He was someone of that stature, yet the Hahoe Mask was acting as if killing Sinclair would be easy.



“It reattaches pretty well since it’s a game.”

Hyrkan once again spoke to Sinclair.

“Ah! You chased after me with such fervor, yet you are trying to run away with my watch?”

It was a provocation.

“The items in there is only worth a pittance to me. If you run away, it would be unsatisfactory... Well, all right. I promised this will be off the record, so I won’t spread any rumors. However, the memory of you running away with your tail behind your leg will remain in my memories.”

After saying his provocation, Hyrkan sneered below his Hahoe Mask.

When Sinclair heard the provocation, he took his glove off before he thought about what he was doing. Then he raised his sword.

It was a smile that he wanted to knock right off Hyrkan’s face.

He planned on cutting his wrist.

“Watchman Style. What a fun concept.”



When Hyrkan saw what he was doing, the smile around Hyrkan's mouth disappeared. It was Sinclair's turn to smirk.

Finally, his wrist had been cut, and Sinclair tossed his wrist watch towards Hyrkan.

Hyrkan wordlessly stared at the watch thrown at his feet. As all of this was going on, Sinclair used the Body Glue to reattach his wrist like Hyrkan.

The expression on their faces had changed. Hyrkan's expression had hardened, and Sinclair had a mocking smile on his face.

“I'll remember the Watchman Style.”

At Sinclair's words, Hyrkan answered by kicking the watch near his feet in a frustrated manner.

It was evidence that Hyrkan was angry.

Sinclair smirked as he laughed.

‘The content of my investigation was all wrong. He's the really prideful type. He gets easily riled up by provocations. He probably never experienced hardship in this game. He probably played the game thinking he is better than everyone.’

It looked as if Hyrkan was filled with rage. He took out numerous



Skeleton Fragments, and he scattered it on the ground.

At the same time, he summoned his Golem.

Koo koo koo!

The Golem appeared, and the Skeleton Fragments morphed into Warriors. Hyrkan yelled out in the midst of an unsettled situation.

“I don’t know who you are, but you’ll pay dearly for challenging me!”

He yelled out with a voice full of anger. Sinclair raised his sword, and he started casting his Buff skills.

At the same time, Sinclair started drawing up a plan inside his head.

‘There is a limit as to how many Skeletons he can summon. In the end, I’ll be at an advantage if I fight him head on.’

Sinclair had devised a method to take down the Hahoe Mask, and it was quite simple.

He would eliminate all of Hyrkan’s summoned familiars, then he would take down Hyrkan!



Normally, he would ignore the familiars, and he would try to take out the summoner as soon as possible. However, this was actually the more dangerous plan. Hyrkan's personal battle prowess was better than an average Striker. He wasn't someone that could be eliminated in a short amount of time. While fighting Hyrkan, one would be in the worst position if one was surrounded by Hyrkan's underlings.

Moreover, the Skeleton Fragments and the Golem summon consumed a lot of Magic Power. Those skills most definitely had a cool down.

Of course, the course of action chosen by Sinclair required him to destroy the fearsome Skeleton Warriors, Skeleton Knight and Golem. They were difficult opponents as some people even considered them as being glitch in the system. However, Sinclair didn't feel any sense of threat from them.

‘I'll destroy them completely.’

After finishing casting his Buffs, Sinclair immediately used the Charge skill. As he used the Charge skill, he swung his sword imbued with the Booster skill.

Shweeeek!

He combined the Charge and Booster skill. Both were Rank A skills. The sword swung by combining these two skills were so fast that the Skeleton Warriors had no chance of dodging it.



Moreover, Sinclair was able to control his body, which was on overdrive through the Charge skill.

A single use of the Charge skill allowed him to cross path with three Skeleton Warriors, and he hit all three of them with a single blow.

He was like a car that couldn't use its break to control its speed. However, he was able to cleanly change directions or it looked as if he was doing it.

The power of the strike was that much more terrifying. The strike looked as if it just brushed by the Skeletons, but all the Items equipped by the Armament skill were destroyed.

During all of this was going on, the Golem had taken shape, and it was bring down its massive arm towards Sinclair.

The enormous hunk of rock was falling towards Sinclair's head.

However, the attack was laughably slow for Sinclair. Moreover, the Clay Play skill hadn't been used, so this was a normal Golem. The chance of the Golem's attack hitting Sinclair was the same as being hit by lightning.

Koooohng!

The evidence of his composure was shown when he lightly avoided the attack, and he immediately jumped onto the Golem's



fist, which had impacted the ground.

At the same time, he swung his sword.

Shweeeek!

A crescent sword energy was emitted from his swung sword, and it headed quickly towards the Golem's shoulder joint.

Poo-hwaht!

One strike.

He had severed the Golem's shoulder with one attack, and the arm fell away to the floor.

Koooohng!

The arm fell to the ground as it let out a lot of noise.

During all of this, the Skeleton Knight had been moving. Sinclair swung his sword towards the Skeleton Knight's body.

Kah-ahng!

It was the Skeleton Knight pitted against Sinclair. They exchanged blows atop the detached fist of the Golem.



Ggee-reek, ggee-reek!

Then the battle between power vs power was initiated.

Of course, the winner was Sinclair. Sinclair's sword easily pushed away the Skeleton Knight's sword.

At that moment, Sinclair foot pushed against the Skeleton Knight. The Skeleton Knight was inferior in terms of strength, so it started taking steps backwards.

The Skeleton Knight fell backwards.

The surface atop the Golem's fist was uneven. The act of regaining one's balance was outside of the skill possessed by the Skeleton Knight.

Sinclair raised his sword high as he shifted towards the fallen Skeleton Knight.

“Thunder!”

Accompanying a short shout of invocation, Sinclair's sword descended.

The sword immediately fell like thunder.



Gwah-roong!

Then he called for real thunder. A single thread of thunder fell towards the sword right before it impacted.

Thunder!

This was a level 160 Rare Fighter Skill. Amongst the currently discovered Fighter Skills, this was the strongest one!

A specific feature of the Thunder skill was being used now against a lower level opponent. It had the Option of ignoring the opponent's defense. Hyrkan was at least 30 level below Sinclair. Basically, the Skeleton Knight summoned by his had no defense against his attack.

The result was terrifying.

It was only one Skill, but the Skeleton Knight had been burnt to a black crisp. It was such a critical blow that the Skeleton Knight was down for the count.

‘This was easy.’

Sinclair had a triumphant expression on his face. At the same time, Sinclair looked for Hyrkan.



Hyrkan had been so confident that his attitude had been arrogant. Sinclair was curious to see what kind of expression he had on his face. He wanted to remember the devastated and crushed look on Hyrkan's face.

‘Mmmm?’

However, he wasn't...

“Uh?”

He really wasn't....

“I...it can't be?”

Hahoe Mask was nowhere to be seen.

‘Ooh wah..... Look at speed at which my Magic is being consumed. His damage dealing is incredible.’

As he was running, Hyrkan clicked his tongue as he watched his Magic decrease with incredible speed.

‘Does this mean he was over level 160? He most definitely has his name up in the Rankings.’

At that moment, Hyrkan had a thin smile as he looked at the



watch grasped in his hand.

‘Greestone Imoogi, Bat Marauder and the Black Steel Wolf... I could give one to the Skeleton Knight.’

He had been speaking out of the both side of his mouth.

When he mentioned the word Watchman, Hyrkan had never considered fighting with Sinclair.

The case against not fighting was overwhelming.

His opponent had researched about Hyrkan. Sinclair was a very skilled player, and he had come prepared for the fight.

On the other hand, Hyrkan had zero information on his opponent.

He hadn't plan on fighting.

In the first place, Hyrkan never fought a hopeless battle.

‘Still, I never expected him to fall for my bullshit...’

He had acted pretty convincingly as he brought up the non-existent Watchman style. He even cut off his wrist, and gave his watch to Sinclair. He had been planning on using his watch as a



sacrifice as he attempted to run away.

He hadn't been trying to get his opponent's watch. His aim was to make his opponent believe that he was going to battle no matter what. If he gave away his watch, it made this deception more believable. At the very least, if his opponent received Hyrkan's watch, he would think it less likely that Hyrkan would run away.

Of course, if his deception worked and he was able to run away, he would have suffered a huge monetary loss. Still, it would be better than suffering a 48hrs penalty on top of losing his Items. It was important to note that the most important Items equipped by Hyrkan like the Secret Society Ring, Ivan's Sword and the Corrupted Accessories couldn't be lost. These Items would always revert to him.

This meant his scheme had brought in a jackpot.

However, his happiness ended there.

He put the watch into his pocket, and he looked at his Magic. He gritted his teeth when he saw only 20% of his Magic left.

‘If I fought him, it would have been horrible for me..’

It meant Sinclair had killed his summoned familiars at an incredible speed. If he fought Sinclair head on, he couldn't guarantee his victory.



It wasn't good news.

‘Why the hell is a bastard like that aiming for me?’

At the very least, Hyrkan was now aware that a big fish was gunning for Hyrkan.

Hyrkan gritted his teeth once again.



# Chapter 104-There Is No Free Lunch (1)

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In Warlord, one could transfer an Item from acquired watch through the fence NPC.

Of course, the fence NPC was located in a neighborhood with a menacing atmosphere. It was common to see Users, who lost their items through PK, to stake out near the fence NPC. This was why sometimes one might meet one's enemies near the fence.

Of course, fights didn't occur around the NPC. There was a tacit agreement that forbid PK near the fence. If one broke this unwritten rule, the User would suffer much more damage than actually losing a single watch.

This was the reason why everyone kept their manners. The only thing they could do was glare at other Users with murderous intent. This worsened the menacing atmosphere around the fence. There was a saying in Warlord that said, 'If you want to experience an intense atmosphere, go near a fence instead of going to a Boss Raid!'

“My commission is 1 gold..”

In such a rough atmosphere, those who can't keep their cool became the prey.

Hyrkan knew this better than anyone. However, Hyrkan's expression indicated otherwise.



“The commission fee is 1 gold. Are you perhaps trying to cheat me out of my commission?”

The fence NPC continued to speak in a threatening manner. As if he finally came to his senses, Hyrkan put his hand into his pocket. When Hyrkan finally took out a coin, Hyrkan’s expression changed. It was as if he had a couple screws loose. He had a silly smile on his face.

In the end, Hyrkan handed over the gold coin to the fence.

“Huh?”

The coin wasn’t engraved with the number one. It had the number 10 imprinted on it.

It was worth 10 gold.

This wasn’t a small amount of money. In real money, it was worth around 100 dollars. No one in the right mind would pay 100 dollars for a 10 dollar service. Moreover, this fence NPC didn’t give back change.

Didn’t Hyrkan put his life on the line for .1 gold before?

Something extraordinary was going on here.



“My commission is one gold.”

This was something that could be corrected immediately.

“It’s a tip.”

However, Hyrkan left the 10 gold in place. He immediately left after taking the Item.

The fence looked at Hyrkan with its head tilted in confusion. The fence NPC didn’t chase after a User if they overpaid. This scenario hadn’t been programmed.

The fence’s expression immediately reverted to its normal expression, and it got ready for the new customer.

[Helm Imbued with the Greenstone Imoogi’s Soul]

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\*Main Properties

- Unique-rank Item
- Strength +144
- Stamina +144
- Required Level : 150

\*Sub-properties

- The Wearer’s Stamina recovery speed is increased by 5%
- If one equips set items‘Imbued with the Greenstone Imoogi’s Soul’, class-specific stat increases



- If three parts of the set item ‘Imbued with the Greenstone Imoogi’s Soul’ is equipped, all Stat will be increased by +50
- If five parts of the set item ‘Imbued with the Greenstone Imoogi’s Soul’ is equipped, all Stat will be increased by +100
- If five parts of the set item ‘Imbued with the Greenstone Imoogi’s Soul’ is equipped, the ‘Greenstone Imoogi’s Curse’ is activated

\*Miscellaneous

- The essence of a Greenstone Imoogi with a vengeful spirit is dwelling with the Item.

He looked at the Stat of the Item stored in his storage. Ahn-jaehyun checked the Stats once again, and he let out a sigh that was filled with mixed emotions.

‘Wow.’

He had read the Item’s Option so much that it had been imprinted into his brain. However, his heart started pounding when he started reading the Item’s Option once again. Even if his heart suddenly came to a stop, his heart would probably start back again if he saw the Item’s Option.

This was how incredible the Item he possessed was.

Ahn-jaehyun once again let out a sigh admiration.

‘It feels akin to buying a 1st place lotto ticket that I know will be a



winner. This is really incredible.'

It was a level 150 Unique Item.

Moreover, this particular one was produced and circulated solely by the V&V guild. They went as far to never selling it to the public. They dealt this Item only within their guild.

This was why one couldn't even put a fair market value of the set.

Ahn-jaehyun was well aware of this fact. Moreover, this fact brought Ahn-jaehyun's heart back to its normal rhythm.

The pounding died down. Ahn-jaehyun drank a sip of his coffee.

'It's a jackpot, but the problem is I can't sell it to anyone.'

As Ahn-jaehyun surmised, he couldn't sell the Greenstone Imoogi Helm to the public.

'Wouldn't the V&V guild try to fight me, while foaming at the mouth, when they realize I sold this piece?'

When the helm appeared in the auction, the V&V guild would immediately take action.



‘If you purchase the Imoogi helm, our guild will declare war on you as a service!’

He was sure that was how the guild would react. As a customer, one would probably be too afraid of the V&V guild to purchase this Item.

Moreover, if it was a full set, there might be a User, who might risk the danger of crossing the V&V guild. However, he didn’t have the full set, and the Greenstone Imoogi Helm could only show its true worth when it was in a set.

A single piece wasn’t that popular.

This was why his potential customer was already predetermined.

‘I have no choice, but to return it to its owner.’

He had no choice, but to sell it to its original owner.

The thought brought a smile to Ahn-jaehyun’s lips. Ahn-jaehyun found the current situation to be quite humorous.

The thief was basically selling the goods back to the owner. It was most definitely a ridiculous situation.

This was a given, but when the owner receives the purchased Item, the owner will step forward to try to kill the thief. However,



Ahn-jaehyun wasn't too worried about that part.

The bastard would have tried to kill Ahn-jaehyun even if this incident never happened.

He was going to fuck over the bastard one more time, so it made Ahn-jaehyun smile.

Also, from Ahn-jaehyun's perspective, the owner of the Item wasn't the one, who had attacked him. There was a possibility that Sinclair had been gifted the Item or the Item had been loaned to him by the V&V guild.

This was why Ahn-jaehyun thought a deal could be struck. Whether it was a present or a loan, the V&V guild would want to recover something that had been lost. It would be tough to see the Item in the hands of another person.

The problem right now was the fact that he didn't know the identity of the person, who had ambushed him. Also, he didn't have any contacts within the V&V guild. It wasn't as if he could just search out the V&V guild then ask for a deal from them.

There was only one answer left.

'I'll contact the V&V guild through the Red Bulls. It'll allow me to make some kind of bridge with them.'

He had to exploit a personal connection.



‘I never expected the Red Bulls to be so helpful like this.’

Ahn-jaehyun felt that it had been worth the effort to develop this personal connection.

“I heard you got spanked by the Hahoe Mask, Sinclair? How can you lose against a User, who is 30 levels below you? It doesn’t make any sense.”

A woman wearing a robe made out of snake leather spoke. She spoke in a sarcastic manner, and it inevitably brought out a reaction from Sinclair.

“Shut up. The bastard ran away. I didn’t lose.”

It was a reasonable reaction..... He reacted in a temperamental manner.

“I heard he stole your watch? That means you got spanked.”

“I got hoodwinked by the bastard. He didn’t steal it from me.”

“Whatever. So which Item did you lose? Don’t you usually fill all three slots?”

An answer came out from another source.



“He is wearing that armor, yet he doesn’t have that idiotic helmet on his head. The answer can be easily deduced.”

When a stolen watch is re-issued to the User, everything was given back to the User except a single Item stored in each slot. Since he wasn’t wearing his helmet, it meant the helmet had been taken from Sinclair’s watch.

“Is it perhaps the Greenstone Imoogi Helm? My god.”

The woman had been speaking playfully until now, but her expression became genuinely worried.

“Of all the.... Didn’t the V&V guild loan that out to you?”

The woman’s reaction made Sinclair’s feelings fall off a deeper cliff. Sinclair gritted his teeth instead of answering. He didn’t want to speak any further. He thought it was fortunate that he was inside a game. If this had been reality, his face would have been beet red as if it was about to explode.

‘Shit. That mother fucking Hahoe Mask.’

Naturally, Sinclair thought about the Hahoe Mask, and he chewed on his lips.

‘Watchman Style? Son of a bitch.’



In truth, he was in a state of disbelief. He had fallen for a scam called the Watchman style. When he searched for the Watchman style online, it returned no result.

This might be a unique method developed to hoodwink a dumb User. Sinclair had probably been the first sacrificial lamb for this method.

It didn't matter how he spun it. This was a bad look for him.

‘I'll kill him no matter what.’

The humiliation didn't end there. Sinclair was in a much fouler mood, because the much anticipated watch of Hyrkan only yielded a Normal Rank robe.

Even if they weren't on a similar level, he had expected a level 120-130 Unique Item. It was known that the Hahoe Mask was always equipped with expensive Items.

Basically, he had stolen the Item of an owner, who owned a masterpiece. However, when one opened the wallet, the only thing inside was two 20 dollar bills and couple coins.

‘Hahoe Mask. I'll kill you every time I meet you in this game.’

Sinclair had to pay the penalty for losing the Greenstone Imoogi



Helmet, and his organization was taking care of the aftermath.

First, he would have to have a conversation with the V&V guild. Sinclair would have a clear idea where he stood only after he ended his talk with the V&V guild. It was best to take all the beating in one sitting. It would be the worst if his punishment came consecutively in multiple parts.

‘Shit.’

Above all else, Sinclair had never experienced failure, so his pride had been hurt.

His organization contacted him at that moment.

– The Greenstone Imoogi helm that was stolen by the Hahoe Mask was recovered by the V&V guild. For awhile, Sinclair is in charge of any business related to the V&V guild. During that time, Sinclair is going to act as a member of the V&V guild. Try your best to think of this as a volunteer service, Sinclair.

“Yes.”

Sinclair planted the sword of revenge inside his heart.

After the Corrupt Count Raid, the Red Bulls and Stormhunters maintained a close and friendly relationship.



Of course, this relationship was unofficial. They were two of the top guilds fighting for the top spot within the 30 great guilds. If their friendly relationship was made official, the other guilds would become alarmed, and they would act accordingly.

Since this close and friendly unofficial relationship had to be maintained, the existence of a hotline was needed.

The Storm Queen and the Matador had established a hotline where they could contact each other unilaterally.

It sounded pretty good saying it like that, but it basically meant the two of them knew each other's phone number.

Currently, Che-sulyun was calling Chev. As she was calling him, Che-sulyun's face was covered with some unknown face pack.

“Chev.”

– I'm in a Raid right now. If you want to talk to me, you'll have to keep it short.

Chev was the recipient of the call, and he was in a tense situation. He had picked up the phone during a battle. Of course, Chev would be in a foul mood.

Of course, Che-sulyun wasn't someone, who cared about Chev's mood.



“I heard a transaction was made between the Hahoe Mask and the V&V guild. I acquired information that the Red Bulls acted as an intermediary.”

Che-sulyun’s voice was calm, and her expression didn’t change. This was the effect of the face pack. If she got angry or frowned, the pack would be rendered useless.

Of course, Chev didn’t know about this, so he was a bit surprised at her reaction. He asked her a question.

– Your intelligence capabilities is impressive. I never realized it was at such a level.

In truth, Chev had expected a call from Che-sulyun. One of the main sponsors of the V&V guild was run by Che-sulyun’s family. A deal had been conducted between the V&V guild and the Hahoe Mask. Of course, she would hear about it. It would have been more suspicious, if she hadn’t heard about it.

When Chev received a call from Che-sulyun, he had expected her to yell at him with a thunderous voice. Unlike how she looked, she was incredibly terrifying.

“I thought I made myself clear last time.”

Of course, Che-sulyun had called to give a warning.



“The Hahoe Mask is ours. Don’t touch him.”

Chev smirked at the warning.

– I didn’t touch him. He’s the one, who suggested the deal. Since I’ve had couple dealings with him, he wanted me to put down a bridge for him.

“You are lucky I have my pack on. If we were holding this conversation inside the game, I would have already killed you.”

Face pack.

Chev finally realized the reason why Che-sulyun was speaking so calmly.

– I guess I am very lucky that you have your pack on. Which part of your sentence should I reply to?

“Give me all the information you have on the Hahoe Mask.”

Her voice was still calm.

However, Chev had a feeling that her calmness had reached its limit.

He wasn’t going to mince his words.



– I’ll put this out in no uncertain terms. I won’t lie. I have great interest in the Hahoe Mask, and I want him on my team.

“Hmmm.”

– If this results in my guild warring with the Stormhunter guild, I’m willing to put up with it. I want the Hahoe Mask to enter into my team.

“Is that so?”

– However, even after such a resolve, I wasn’t able to recruit the Hahoe Mask. You may glean what you may from my answer.

“Hand over the info.”

– I have no information regarding the Hahoe Mask. I just have a route I can use to make a deal with him. The trade route I am talking about is the Information Merchant, who revealed the identity of the Corrupt Count.

Che-sulyun’s brows twitched at his words. A very small wrinkle formed on her pack.

– That is all the information I can give you. You should consider it a present . The fact that I’m even telling you this much is, because I’m taking into account our relationship. Red Bulls are in a



cooperative relationship with the Stormhunters. We aren't in a master and servant relationship.

Che-sulyun didn't give an answer. Chev was waiting for her to answer, but words weren't coming easily to her.

In the end, Chev continued to speak.

– I'm not speaking as the guild master right now. I'll give you some personal advice. Hahoe Mask only does deals. He gives only as much as he receives. If you really want a closer relationship with the Hahoe Mask, you should try getting him in your debt.

Che-sulyun still hadn't answered him.

– If needed, I can act as an intermediary. I plan on contacting the Hahoe Mask soon. Are you still on the phone? There's no answer. Huh? Did the call get cut off?

Che-sulyun was finally able to open her mouth. She had a big frown on her face.

“Are you telling me to become his Daddy Long Legs?”

It seemed she would have to buy a new pack.



## Chapter 105 – There Is No Free Lunch (2)

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[Your Level has increased.]

Accompanying the Announcement, the Black Lamia's body flopped to the floor. It was a large monster about 10 meters long.

It had the lower body of a snake, and a muscular upper body. It also possessed a snake's head. The sight of the monster falling left a strong impression.

Koong!

The sound of the impact was also incredible.

Hyrkan had been attached to the Black Lamia's back, but when the Black Lamia fell to its death, he couldn't resist against the shock of the impact. He was thrown into the air. However, Hyrkan didn't do anything in the air. He didn't even brace himself for the landing. He didn't do anything to lessen the impact he would feel.

He fell to the floor like a lifeless corpse. Even after he fell to the floor, he didn't move. He was still like a corpse.

Ddul-goo-ruhk ddul-goo-ruhk!



The surviving Skeleton underlings gathered around Hyrkan. The Skeleton Knight's Bone Armor was shattered, and all the surviving Skeleton Warriors were marred by injuries. There was a total of four Skeletons, and they surrounded Hyrkan in a circle as if they were making a perimeter. They stared down at Hyrkan.

It was a bizarre sight.

Moreover, the Skeleton Warriors were using Hyrkan's magic to slowly recover their body. They didn't look like his underlings right now. It looked as if Hyrkan was surrounded by monsters that was about to eat him. If someone unwittingly came upon this sight, one might make the mistake in thinking Hyrkan was being attacked by the monsters.

At that moment, a thought crossed Hyrkan's mind.

‘Ah. I'm really tired.’

It was tiring..

In truth, Hyrkan should have already ended his playing time. If he followed his original schedule, he should have been logged out 40 minutes ago. He should have been asleep dreaming about eating steaks inside his dreamland.

Moreover, time was very valuable to Hyrkan. If one wanted to be called an expert in Warlord, one had to dedicate one's life to Warlord. However, the biggest obstacle wasn't the scary monsters



inside the game. It was being able to keep one's body healthy.

If the level 130 Black Lamia wasn't such a sweet fruit, Hyrkan wouldn't have made any changes to his schedule.

‘I almost didn't catch it.’

Of course, the Black Lamia was worth investing his time to catch it.

In the Great Urugal mountain, the Users were still avoiding the region between the entrance and the halfway point of the mountain. In this ambiguous region, there was a very low chance of finding the Black Lamia. Most users weren't even aware of the existence of the Black Lamia. If he could get the footage of the hunt and make an Item out of the Ingredient coin, it would be worth a lot of money. The incredibly luxurious Snake Leather Belt was made out of the ingredient coin dropped by the Black Lamia. It was very popular amongst the female Users.

He didn't regret catching it.

However, there was something that worried him. It took him much longer than expected to catch it.

‘My condition is a mess these days.’

Condition Disorder.



A person's condition couldn't always be great. There were good days and bad days.

However, Hyrkan's condition wasn't showing any signs of recovering easily, and the issue was dragging at Hyrkan's ankle.

This had been also true today.

He could have caught it faster and with more style, but he hadn't been able to.

This wouldn't be a problem with the monsters, but this would be a very big problem if he met the Users, who were gunning for him.

'It'll be very dangerous if I meet one right now.'

The probability of tricking another one with the Watchman Style was higher than his chance for victory right now.

Hyrkan gritted his teeth.

'Patience.'

Hyrkan showed his patience. However, Hyrkan's patience couldn't calm down his twisting uneasiness.



At that moment, a thought appeared inside Hyrkan's mind.

'I have to be patient. I have to think about the Red Skeleton set. Yes, I can wear it now.'

Red Skeleton Set.

A smile barely formed around Hyrkan's lips when he thought about the Item set.

'Uh?'

When he saw it for the first time, he almost doubted his own eyes.

'What the hell?'

He had made a deal with the V&V guild. The Red Bulls had been the middle man. As a price for handing over the Greenstone Imoogi helm, the V&V guild promised to give a level 130 Unique Rank weapon named 'Gargoyle Knight's Sword.'

Truthfully, he didn't like the deal. Hyrkan was in more need of a defensive gear instead of a level 130 weapon. Hyrkan currently had a Chronicle Rank item. Ivan's Sword wasn't inferior to any level 140 Unique Rank weapons. It was that great in terms of Options and offensive capability.



Hyrkan wasn't going to use a level 130 Unique weapon, so this Item was basically an expensive paperweight.

Of course, he wouldn't turn it down, but a paperweight was a paperweight. It was a paperweight he could sell at a high price. If need be, he could give it to his Skeleton Knight or Warrior. He could get his bang for buck through that method.

Moreover, if he asked for a defensive gear instead of a weapon in such a situation, it could have upset the entire deal.

Excessive greed could cause harm. It was best to take what was given in such a situation.

But!

‘Why did they give me a Red Skeleton set?’

He checked the inventory list given by the Red Bulls. It contained the weapon from the V&V guild, and a defensive set.

Moreover, it wasn't a normal item. It was the full Red Skeleton set.

‘Isn't this quite expensive?’

Red Skeleton Set.



The Red Skeleton Knight was a level 130 Boss monster. The ingredients and gems dropped by the boss was used to make the Rare Rank Items. Currently, the set was one of the top 10 known level 130 Rare Rank defensive sets. It was a very decent item.

Of course, it was inferior to a Unique Rank item, but it still took a good amount of gold to be able to gather this entire set.

Moreover, there weren't that many in existence. If one wanted to purchase it immediately, one had to pay a premium price.

‘Wait a minute. Isn't this from the Stormhunters?’

Currently, the ones who were providing most of the Items related to the Red Skeleton was the Stormhunters guild.

It wasn't as if the Stormhunters guild were the only ones supplying it, but there weren't that many guilds or teams that could catch a level 130 Boss Monster whenever they wanted. The Red Skeleton Knight Raid was quite difficult. The success rate was low unless it was done by an experienced Raid team.

It could be basically considered the Stormhunter guild's Item.

‘Did they deliver it to me by mistake?’

Anyways, this was something that shouldn't have been sent to Hyrkan. It was reasonable for Hyrkan to believe that the item had been delivered by mistake. It wasn't as if there weren't any



accidental deliveries in Warlord. No matter how great the game system, is, humans were prone to mistake.

At that point, Hyrkan agonized over his decision.

‘Maybe I should just take it?’

If this was mistakenly sent to him by mistake by the Stormhunters guild, he might take it for himself immediately! He wanted to see the Stormhunters bellyache over it. He would have purposefully kept the item.

‘Isn’t that a bit of a stretch?’

However, the Item hadn’t been sent by the Stormhunters. It had been given by the Red Bulls. Currently, the Red Bulls had been of help to Hyrkan. If he carelessly took one of their Items, it would inevitably bring trouble with the Red Bulls.

Hyrkan immediately contacted the Red Bulls guild.

On that day, Hyrkan experienced something for the first time.

– It wasn’t delivered to you by mistake. It is a present from an admirer of the Hahoe Mask. You don’t have to return it.

An angel was present in this damn game called Warlord!



“I don’t know who it is, but give my thanks to that person. Please deliver a message for me. I’ll treat the person to lunch if we ever get to meet in real life!”

Hyrkan smiled brightly when he remembered that incident.

‘I don’t know, who it is, but I’ve been blessed. For reals.’

Accompanying the smile, Hyrkan checked the Option of the Red Skeleton set, which was stored in his 3rd slot.

#### [Red Skeleton Set]

\*When 2 parts are equipped

– Class-specific stats +55

\*When 3 parts are equipped

– Class-specific stats +77

– The cool time of all skills decreased by 10%

\*When 4 parts are equipped

– All stats +50

– The magic power consumption of all skills decreased by 10%

\*When 5 parts are equipped

– All stats +100

– When in battle, the Red Skeleton Knight’s Aura is activated.

Hyrkan had a satisfied smile on his face.



The part he liked the most was the Red Skeleton Knight's Aura. When it was activated in battle, the damage percentage was decreased based on the wearer's HP. When the HP decreased by more than half, it increased the All Stats by percentage proportionally to the HP lost from that point on. This effect activated instead of damage reduction Option.

“Slot on!”

Hyrkan immediately activated his Slot.

It looked as if eight enormous spider legs were grasping Hyrkan. Strands started to appear from Hyrkan's back, and it was wrapping around Hyrkan.

The strands were sticking to Hyrkan's body, and it was rapidly taking shape.

In 3 seconds, Hyrkan's Item Setting was changed.

Hyrkan immediately checked out the design of his new defensive set. He used a video program to check out his entire body.

‘Uh?’

Hyrkan was a bit surprised.



‘Its design is similar to the Skeleton Snake?’

The Red Skeleton set was similar in design as the set he wore when he was level 50. It looked similar to the Skeleton Snake set.

The Skeleton Snake set had meant a lot to Hyrkan. At the time, he was short on funds, so he had ignored the appearance of the Items. He only looked at the Options as he wore whatever he could get. He had been a fashion terrorist.

The Skeleton Snake set was the first set Item that had looked good.

Of course, there were differences between the two sets. It was similar in that the sets looked as if the User was wearing a Skeleton over black tights. As befitting the name of Red Skeleton set, the color of the bones was red. The red colored bones went very well with the black tights.

However, the part he fancied the most was the helm. There was a thick bone that was curved like the tail of a pig attached to the helm, and the face region of the Skeleton Helm it wasn't shaped like a normal skull. It was shaped like the Hahoe Mask.

This was a definite proof.

‘Wow! This really is a customized set.’

This was proof that someone custom-ordered this design for



Hyrkan!

Hyrkan smiled.

He hadn't been feeling well for a while, but suddenly he felt much better. His condition was surging boundlessly towards the sky.

'I'm feeling great now. It feels like my luck is starting to come back to me!'

Hyrkan used this momentum to charge towards the Bulkas village.

Bulkas Ranger Master Maeung.

In recent days, this particular NPC's fame was increasing at a much faster rate than the other NPCs in Warlord. All the Users worth their salt was seen meeting Maeung quite frequently. Of course, the Users realized this NPC was incredibly important at this stage of the game.

Numerous Users tried to increase their contacts with Maeung. Any Quest info, Quest route and raids related to the Maeung was heating up the online community.

With all that in mind, Hyrkan had come to meet with Maeung.



“Isn’t that the Hahoe Mask?”

“Ah? It’s the real Hahoe Mask!”

He hadn’t concealed his identity.

He was wearing his new clothes.

If he had concealed his identity to meet with the Maeung, the Users would have thought he was a pushover based on his bare face. They would approach him to cause trouble. Hyrkan knew this better than anyone, so he decided to reveal his identity. It prevented the mediocre users from approaching him.

Moreover, there was an additional reason why they stayed away from him.

“Uh? What the hell is that? Is that a new set Item?”

“It’s the Red Skeleton set! I’m sure of it! It’s the Red Skeleton Set! However, I’ve never seen that design.”

“The helm looks like a Hahoe Mask. It seems he custom made it to look like a Hahoe Mask.”

“He custom made the Red Skeleton Set. I heard the Hahoe Mask is the child of a magnate. I guess the rumor is true.”



“He wasn’t born with a golden spoon. He was born with a diamond spoon. I’m so envious.”

He was showing off his newly made Item in front of everyone! This might be his true purpose in coming here like this. When one acquired an expensive Item, it was best to show it off to other Users instead of the monsters.

When Hyrkan faced Maeung, Maeung immediately greeted Hyrkan.

“I’ve been waiting for your arrival.”

Before Hyrkan could start up a conversation, Maeung reached for a map on top of his desk.

Then it ignored Hyrkan’s attempt at a greeting, and it immediately gave Hyrkan a Quest.

“We found this Dungeon map, which is related to the Cursed Domain. This secret Dungeon is below the Cursed Castle. I believe some kind of experiment had been conducted there. Your task is to bring me evidence from this Dungeon.”

[The Quest ‘Evidence’ has started.]

Maeung didn’t even consult Hyrkan. It just gave the Quest.



It forcibly pushed the Quest onto Hyrkan.

‘This is.... The Crest of the Royal Family will appear.’

This basically meant the second Main Scenario Quest, Immoral Prince episode, was going to start in earnest.

Nine Users were gathered in one location. A variety of Items were being worn by these Users. If one was knowledgeable about Warlord, one would realize these Items required very high levels, and they were all very expensive.

The nine Users equipped with these Items were in a conversation, and the atmosphere around them indicated something important was going down.

The nine users looked like employees that was getting ready for a company’s important project announcement. They were busy and disordered.

‘Where did the information come from?’

‘Is the Quest information correct?’

‘Check it again!’

‘Give me that too!’



‘What happened to the thing we spoke about before?’

The conversation was very chaotic.

A User that looked to be the head of the group started to bring order to the conversation. He set the right mood then he spat out his words.

“Attention! Let’s summarize it. Who had the closest relationship to the Corrupt Count? Was it Prince Arthur or Prince Dean?”

The atmosphere had settled, and an answer was given.

“It is public knowledge that Prince Arthur was the patron of the Corrupt Count. However, if we analyze the numerous Quest content and Quest info regarding the Corrupt Count, it had become apparent that the Corrupt Count has more of a connection with Prince Dean.”

“I knew it. The name was a trap. I suspected it. Isn’t Arthur too obvious?”

The other eight Users nodded their heads at the leader’s words.

“Does the Red Bulls guild know about Prince Dean?”

“There is a high probability that they don’t know about him.



They basically found out about the Corrupted Count by luck last time.”

“That’s true. However, that’s a problem.”

The leader gritted his teeth when he thought about that time.

“We can’t allow what happened with the Corrupted Count to happen again. He have to unconditionally take the lead on this. How can 9 heads lose to a beast that has only one? Aren’t I right?”

No one gave an answer.

They put on their game face instead of answering.



# Chapter 106 – Catacombs (1)

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Cursed Domain.

The powerful monsters called Voodoo Chimera were swarming this location. This was a difficult stage where a User had to be at least a certain level to play here. Moreover, the Evil Eyes appeared intermittently. If one wanted to block the Evil Eye's Curse, one had to finish the Quest to get 'Sarabo's Charm'. Even Users well over level 140 were ruthlessly sent back to reality if one didn't have 'Sarabo's Charm'.

Moreover, this location didn't drop really good Items, and the EXP wasn't that great considering the difficulty of the Voodoo Chimera hunt. The method to clearing the Voodoo Chimera was still under research.

From that perspective, this was really a cursed place for high level Users, who sought efficiency in their hunts. They should have had no reason or interest in stepping onto this stage.

However, there were an unusual amount of high level users hanging around the Cursed Domain. These Users were all over level 140.

“What's the status of the Quests?”

“There's definitely a variety of Quests here compared to other locations. There are more Search Quests and Commission Quests compared to the simple Hunt Quests.”



After the Noopy Family arrived at the Cursed Castle, a branch office of the Subjugation Association was established inside the Cursed Castle.

At the same time, the Cursed Castle received a respectable name called Heuban's Castle.

The NPC related to the Subjugation Association revealed new NPCs that started to fill up the Heuban's Castle.

This was the reason why the Users were coming here.

New NPCs had appeared. New Quests meant opportunity.

The Cursed Domain was the land of opportunity.

This was what the Cursed Castle had turned into.

Hyrkan arrived at the Heuban's Castle.

“Who is that?”

“Who?”

“The Sword Class User over there.”



“You mean the Swordsman wearing the Rusted Steel set? Who cares? Isn’t the Rusted Steel set a level 90 defensive set? Maybe he came here to sightsee. Don’t pay attention to him.”

He came in secret.

He hadn’t worn his custom Red Skeleton set given to him by his unknown benefactor. He wore the defensive gear that had been previously equipped by his Skeleton. He had appeared with his identity hidden.

There was simple reason why he had hidden his identity.

‘If I’m following the map correctly, the Secret Entrance should be over there.’

Dungeon.

This was the reason why he had hidden his identity.

Maeung had given Hyrkan a map that showed where the secret Dungeon was located beneath the Cursed Castle.

It was described as being a secret region of the castle, but it was basically a Dungeon. This was an obvious thing to say, but it wouldn’t be great if this information was leaked.

Moreover, the Users that were operating out of the Cursed Castle



right now were like demons, who knew the ins and out of Warlord.

The Users were here on the off chance that an unexpected opportunity might pop up.

If Hyrkan operated in this region as the Hahoe Mask, he would be like a mother duck with its ducklings following after it. He'll have a large tail of Users following after him.

Anyways, Hyrkan's effort had been a success. None of the Users within the Cursed Castle paid any attention to him. This expedited his progress in getting to his destination.

‘Uh?’

At that moment, something had suddenly attracted Hyrkan's attention.

It was a statue.

It was a statue of several Users in a heroic pose. They were the four heroes, who had killed the first Evil Eye. They had also reached the Cursed Castle first. The Subjugation Association had created a statue of the Noopy Family.

‘Shit.’

Of course, the Noopy family had more or less stolen the Sarabo's



Sword from under him.

‘The Options on that Item was killer.’

The Options for the Sarabo’s Sword had been immediately posted online. Hyrkan gritted his teeth when he thought about it.

As a level 140 Unique Rank Item, the Sarabo’s Sword had great Options. At the same time, the Item was tradeable, and it was high in scarcity.

If he had sold it for a high price, he would have been able to make some eye-popping amount of money.

‘If it hadn’t been for that son of a bitch...’

If Sinclair hadn’t interfered, the Item would have been in the possession of Hyrkan.

When he thought about the situation, it made his inside burn even if he was inside the game.

Hyrkan shook his head from side to side.

‘If I get a little bit stronger, I’ll keep hunting him down until this game closes its service.’



He made a resolution as he shook his head.

At the same time...

‘Please let there be something amazing in this Dungeon.’

He prayed earnestly.

Hyrkan’s thoughts were very busy in many aspects.

Koohng!

The ceiling of the pitch black tunnel fell. When the bricks forming the ceiling hit the ground, the rugged sound rang out. As if he was trying to quell the rugged sound from ringing out, a person fell through the ceiling! He let out a minimum amount of sound as he landed, and he immediately manipulated the watch on his wrist.

“Slot on.”

He yelled out a short phrase.

The armor made out of red bones appeared.

The owner of the Red Skeleton set was Hyrkan. After he finished the Item Switching, he held his breath as he listened to his



surrounding.

‘There’s nothing nearby.’

Fortunately, he didn’t hear anything out of the ordinary.

Afterwards, Hyrkan let out a complaint.

‘Why isn’t there any Announcements? Usually there should be an Announcement regarding a User entering the Dungeon. Where’s the announcement for the Titles?’

Hyrkan turned on the light app on his wrist watch after he complained couple more times.

Paht!

The light source was small, but the powerful light illuminated the surrounding. It allowed Hyrkan to be able to estimate the size of the tunnel.

The tunnel was quite large. From the floor to the ceiling, there was a distance of about 3 meters. The width was slightly less than 5 meters. Most family cars could drive through this tunnel.

‘I’m pretty sure I’m at the right place....’



Hyrkan was relieved when he saw the size of the tunnel. A tunnel of this size wouldn't be used as an escape tunnel. This meant this tunnel was built for a different purpose.

Hyrkan stealthily took out a single Skeleton Fragment. He summoned the Skeleton Knight. As soon as he summoned it, Hyrkan placed the light app on top of the Skeleton Knight's head.

The Skeleton Knight had become a walking light bulb. Hyrkan decided to reward his Skeleton Knight. He activated the Madness Helm then he summoned the Bone Armor. He also placed Curses on the sword being held by the Skeleton Knight.

How long had he been walking?

‘All right.’

The material making up the tunnel had changed, then a straight road suddenly appeared.

Hyrkan could sense something had changed.

[You've entered the Dungeon 'Catacombs'.]

[You've earned the title 'Visitor of the Catacombs'.]

[You've earned the title 'Awakened from Slumber'.]



The Announcements he heard immediately confirmed his suspicions. A smile formed on Hyrkan's lips.

‘Yes. This is it.’

At the same time as the Announcements, a noise intruded into the quiet space.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, ddul-goo-ruhk.

Hyrkan heard a very familiar sound.

The smile on Hyrkan's lips shited in an odd way.

‘What the hell?’

Eventually, a skeletal version of a Voodoo Chimera appeared in front of the Skeleton Knight. It was none other than the Chimera Skeleton. The smile around Hyrkan's lips turned into a sneer.

‘Would you look at this?’

It was rusty, but the Chimera Skeleton was fully equipped. The Chimera Skeleton had a presence couldn't be ignored.

Moreover, there were two of them. It felt as if the tunnel was packed, and it inevitably increased the pressure given off by the



monsters.

If he had been a normal User, he would have been nervous in this situation.

However, the monsters were laughable to Hyrkan.

‘Who do you think I am? How dare a Skeleton show themselves in front of me!’

Hyrkan didn’t summon any additional additional Skeleton Warriors or Magicians. He didn’t even summon his Golem. He spoke in a low voice as he stood behind the Skeleton Knight.

“If you get killed by such opponents, get ready to dodge my fists every day in training when I summon you the next time.”

It was as if the Skeleton Knight understood what had been said by Hyrkan. The Skeleton Knight opened its mouth wider than usual, and it unhesitatingly charged towards its enemies.

Hyrkan’s Skeleton Knight skill was Rank C. It was a case where the Rank was rising much faster than Hyrkan’s level. It was evidence that the Skeleton Knight had performed more brilliantly than he had expected.

Moreover, every one of his summoned Skeletons were influenced by the Rank A Skeleton Science skill. It increased all stats of the Skeleton by 30%. On top of that, the Skeleton Knight was using the



Madness Helm skill. The Rank A Madness Helm had the effect of increasing all stats by 30%.

It didn't end there. There was something else that could also be used by the Skeleton Knight.

It was the Rank A Bone Armor. A layer of sturdy Bone Armor protected the Skeleton Knight's entire body.

Of course, the Bone Armor was inferior to Rare Rank defensive sets.

However, the Rank A Armament skill allowed Hyrkan to equip the Skeleton Knight with the Clear Spider set and the Gargoyle Knight's sword. The Bone Armor was like a coating laminated over steel.

As the finishing stroke, Hyrkan had trained his Skeletons everyday whenever he had some spare time. This allowed the Skeleton Warriors to be able to dodge Hyrkan's attack, who boasted a higher Strength stat than a Swordsman class.

These were the reasons why Hyrkan's pride wouldn't let his Skeleton Knight lose to a similarly equipped Skeleton monsters.

“Yes. That's right! Drill him!”

The Skeleton Knight was defending Hyrkan's pride. The Skeleton Knight cornered the two Chimera Skeletons, who were



blocking the tunnel.

Hweeeek!

In the small space, the Skeleton Knight easily dodged the halberds swung by the Chimera Skeletons. The Skeleton Knight immediately swung its petrified sword towards the Chimera Skeleton's armor.

Kwah-jeek!

The one-sided attack continued, and the Chimera Skeleton's armor was turned into junk. The only thing left was to trash the Chimera Skeleton's body.

From the back, Hyrkan touched his Bone Explosives and Skeleton Fragments.

The sight in front of Hyrkan was satisfying.

‘My hard labor was worth it.’

It felt akin to your kid getting into a named university. He truly felt that way.

At the same time, he gained confidence.



‘I’m better than Rich Lich.’

He was confident in that statement now. Hyrkan had built himself up to a point where he had jumped over his role model, Rich Lich.

The only thing he was lacking was funds. If he had the funds, Hyrkan could do everything that had been shown to him by Rich Lich.

‘Yes. All I need is money.’

Of course, money was the source of his biggest problem.

‘If I had money, nothing would be impossible in the first place.’

Hyrkan was like a parent with a child, who was about to enter into college. He felt a feeling akin to a parent worrying about the school tuition.

Hyrkan was growing at an incredibly fast pace. He didn’t have to worry about the front-runners anymore. Several Users suspected the secret to the ridiculous fighting abilities of the Skeleton Warriors. They were attempting to grow a Necromancer like the Hahoe Mask. However, Hyrkan didn’t feel threatened by them. He wouldn’t have to worry about any of them unless someone gets hit by a truck and that someone is sent back into the past.

The problem was the fact that Hyrkan would truly be competing



against talented individuals, who had dedicated their lives to Warlord. He would have to compete against those who achieved a lot in this game through their effort and talent.

Moreover, the market for the Items he would use will change now. If Hyrkan wanted to get the best quality Items befitting his level, his funds would be inadequate to the task.

Even if he did have the funds, he would run into those, who would halt a deal, because of who he was.

When his train of thought reached that point, Hyrkan's expression cooled off.

His Skeleton Knight's performance had heated up his heart, but now it had cooled off.

His cooled heart directed Hyrkan's hand to move. Hyrkan took out several Skeleton Fragments, and he threw it over the Chimera Skeletons. The Skeleton Warriors formed behind the Chimera Skeletons. They opened their mouth wide as they waited for his command.

Hyrkan flicked his finger twice.

As if the Skeleton Warriors were trying to console their master, they leapt into action.



## Chapter 107 – Catacombs (2)

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The familiars summoned by the Necromancers could be developed in such a way that they gained combat AI through battles.

This was especially effective if the familiars fought a large number of similar type monsters. Moreover, it would be best if one minimized the losses taken by the familiars in battle. As the familiar gains numerous victories against the monsters, their combat AI increases to an altogether different level.

This was why numerous Warlord Users mothballed their current character after seeing the Hahoe Mask's Skeletons. They had been tempted into growing a Necromancer.

The Necromancer didn't even need to command the familiars.

When a monster appeared in the big tunnel, the Skeleton Knight was the first one to face the enemy.

While the Skeleton Knight was occupying the monster, Hyrkan threw one or two Skeleton Fragments to the other side of the Skeleton Knight and the monster. That was all he had to do. This simple action allowed him to form a formation where his Skeleton underlings attacked from the front and the back.

Since the Skeletons were fighting one type of monster here, they had become specialist after fighting the same monsters several hundred times. The Skeleton Warriors and Skeleton Knight held



the numerical advantage, and they were placed in advantageous positions by Hyrkan. The outcome of the battles were basically settled.

The one-sided battle continued to happen. It was so one-sided that Hyrkan didn't have the chance to do anything! It was so bad that he could take his eyes off the battle. He watched some unknown guild's Raid video.

In many ways, the Catacombs Dungeon was too ideal for Hyrkan.

“Jeez! Really!”

It would have been perfect except for one thing.

“Why did another deadend appear here! Why? What's the reason? I just want to go forward!”

The Catacombs was a maze Dungeon.

“Ooh-ahhh. Really!”

Hyrkan was pretty poor at finding the right route in the maze type Dungeon.

If it wasn't for this fact, the exploration of the Catacomb would have been like a vacation instead of work.



This one factor drove Hyrkan nuts.

“What are you looking at? Shut your mouth!”

In the end, Hyrkan became hysterical towards the Skeleton Warrior, who was staring at him with its mouth open.

At that moment, the light within the Skeleton Warrior's eyes changed. The two globes within the socket of the skull started to burn.

Was the Skeleton Warrior resentful at being exploited? Was it angry towards its vicious master, who beat on it whenever he had a free time? Did the Skeleton finally snap?

Of course, that wasn't the case.

After the light within its eyes changed, the Skeleton Warrior immediately turned around. It looked towards its back. The light above the Skeleton Warrior's head illuminated the surrounding, and a Chimera Skeleton came into its view.

The Skeleton Warrior got ready to charge into battle.

However, Hyrkan moved before the Skeleton Warrior could move. Hyrkan raised Ivan's Sword, and he charged in towards the Chimera Skeleton before his Skeleton Warrior could get there. The battle started immediately.



The sword was hovering around the Chimera Skeleton like a satellite, and his constant sword swings crushed the Chimera Skeleton's armor. He broke its bones, and when a thick piece of bone was cut away, he tossed it far into the distance. The sight made one feel sorry for the Chimera Skeleton. The battle was that one-sided.

The battle reached its peak when Hyrkan was successful in stealing the Chimera Skeleton's skull. When he stole the skull, he let his Skeleton Warrior finish the battle, and he started to have fun by hitting the skull as if it was a bongo drum.

It had been a week since he had entered the Catacombs.

This was a solution he had found, which relieved his hysteria.

[Those who Find the Wall]

– Stamina +2

Recently he had gained a new Title. Ahn-jaehyun tightly closed his eyes when he saw it.

‘Shit. I received this one again.’

Those who Find the Wall.



In a maze type Dungeon, one acquired this title when one encounters a certain number of deadends.

The Title Option wasn't that great. These were Titles one could only gain when one finds a deadend. Users with time on their hands intentionally searched out deadends to gain these Titles.

On the other hand, when one received this title unintentionally, it caused anger instead of happiness.

‘The Quest isn't progressing at all.’

This was the reason why Anh-jaehyun was mad.

In truth, the Catacombs Dungeon was Ahn-jaehyun's most optimal hunting ground. The EXP given was quite high, so the level up pace was very good. Moreover, the hunt wasn't difficult, so he barely used any consumable Items.

However, the Quest progress was basically stalled compared to the hunting speed.

The Catacomb Dungeon's maze was bigger than expected, and it was complicated. Moreover, the maze was pitch black, so it increased the difficulty of clearing the maze. On top of all of that, he had no clue on how to solve mazes. From Ahn-jaehyun's perspective, the maze was driving him crazy.



‘I’m sure Users, who are good at this kind of stuff, would have solved this immediately. Why is my luck so poor?’

Of course, luck was a big factor in all of this. If he had luck on his side, he would be able to get past this place in a single breath.

This fact was evident by seeing the map of the Catacomb Dungeon that was being updated by Ahn-jaehyun. If a User was lucky, the maze map would look simple and fragmented.

However, Ahn-jaehyun’s map was too detailed. He had run into too many walls, and he had marked all the deadends he had encountered. He had so many route marked that he could sell it later as a comprehensive map.

However, it just made Ahn-jaehyun’s insides burn.

‘This game is a real mother fucker.’

In the end, Ahn-jaehyun had to take an emergency measure to help his sour stomach. He didn’t take a digestive medicine. He used a more sure-fire method. He checked the current summary of his bank account.

A happy smile formed around Ahn-jaehyun’s lips when he saw the balance.

‘My stomach feels full from just looking at this.’



With the help of his successful Waltz video, he was getting a constant stream of ad money and donations. He even received support fund from his recently signed sponsor. The amount was quite large.

If he wanted to, he could immediately leave his one room behind. He could probably find a 20-30 pyeong apartment near the metropolitan area. He would be able to purchase a small or medium sized apartment. He would also be able to buy a car with a lump sum.

However, Ahn-jaehyun's standards differed from others.

‘If I save a little bit more, I can purchase a level 130 Unique defensive Set. Shall I buy it for my Skeleton Knight? No, it might be better to equip all my Skeleton Magicians with Unique Rank weapons. Should I purchase a Skill book? If the Skeleton Magicians can use the Dark Flame skill.... However, a single Skill book is worth 10,000 gold, and it is rarely put up on the market. Maybe it would be better if I just abandon that idea?’

Ahn-jaehyun's thought about his happy troubles made him thirsty, so he opened his fridge. In a surprise, he decided to take out the milk carton. Ahn-jaehyun didn't even bother to pour the milk into a cup. He just drank it straight out of the carton.

The milk was more expensive than Ramen, but Ahn-jaehyun downed the whole thing. He smiled with a milk mustache on his face.



‘This makes me feel like I’ve been a bit successful.’

The milk helped erase the sensation of his insides burning. It disappeared like melting snow.

Ahn-jaehyun once again focused on the map on the Tablet PC. He calmly thought it over as he looked at the map.

‘I’ve pretty much discovered every route. I just have to be patient. It’ll be done soon. Yes, there is no reason why I have to get discouraged. You weren’t wrong, Ahn-jaehyun.’

After regaining his calm, the light within Ahn-jaehyun’s eyes became cold.

Hyrkan noticed the definite change. He caught sight of a Chimera Skeleton wearing a different armor. It was very similar to the ones he had seen up until now, but Hyrkan didn’t miss the clear difference.

‘I finally get to see it.’

Hyrkan had searched for a difference, and he had found a faint emblem imprinted on the armor.

It was circular emblem, where three snakes were biting each other’s tails!



‘The three snakes are Prince Dean’s Crest. I finally get to see it.’

In one viewed the world of Warlord, there was a faction, who had the most territory and the strongest forces. In the era of the monsters, the Hiban kingdom was at the frontline of fighting the monsters. When the third prince was born, castle of Bayan was given to the prince.

Before he was born, the great Archmage Bokaan gave the prince a name. The name implied the prince would drive away the nightmare descending on the world with martyrs on his side. The name he had given was Dean.

Moreover, as the father and king ruling over the Hiban kingdom, the prince was given the title of Un Northland. It meant he was the protector of the Northern lands.

Bayan Dean Un Northland.

Then the crest with the three snakes was bestowed on him. The three snakes was named Martial Arts, Wisdom and Destiny. He was symbolized as being the trigon prince.

‘I’ve finally arrived at the edge.’

When the power of Corruption left over by the Fallen Kingdom was found, Prince Dean sought to steal the throne with his new found power. He had conducted numerous evil deeds as he



dreamed about creating his own era. He was the Immoral Prince.

The tracks of Prince Dean had finally appeared.

It meant Hyrkan was on the right path. It was evidence that he was carrying out the Immoral Prince episode correctly.

Of course, Hyrkan didn't care about the epic storyline related to Prince Dean.

The important thing right now was that he had discovered a Chimera Skeleton wearing an armor engraved with Prince Dean's crest. Basically, he had found the breadcrumbs left behind by Hansel and Gretel.

'I can finally get out of the Catacombs now.'

If he followed the breadcrumbs, he'll find the witch's house, then the delicious cookies making up the house will show itself.

Hyrkan raised his head as he looked into the darkness.

Che-sulyun was checking out someone's youtube page through her smartphone. A slight wrinkle formed on her cold face. The wrinkle had formed near her bewitching eyes.

'Why isn't he uploading any videos of it? I purposefully special ordered it from a designer.'



It was akin to gifting your significant other with a handmade scarf. This was like the boyfriend coming to the next date without the scarf around his neck. This was how she felt.

Of course, she had never felt this kinds of feelings before, so she couldn't identify what was fouling her mood like this. The fact that she couldn't identify this feeling meant it kept worsening her mood.

At that moment, the smart phone's screen suddenly changed. It was an incoming phone call. The call was coming from the Stormhunters guild. It was Hatch. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that he received the most abuse from Che-sulyun in the Stormhunters guild.

– Master.

“What is it?”

– Uh.....

It was the effect of him being constantly berated by her. Hatch felt nervous when he heard Che-sulyun's voice. He knew he was sticking his hand into boiling oil.

Unfortunately, he had to continue on with his conversation.



– There is someone, who wants to speak directly to master.

“Is he someone important?”

– At the very least, he is more famous than me. He also possesses very high level, and he holds a high position. His rank is a bit too ambiguous to describe it.

The light in Che-sulyun’s eyes changed when she heard the expression he used. There was only one organization within Warlord where that particular turn of phrase was used to describe them.

“Are you talking about a head of the Hydra guild?”

– Yes.

Hydra guild.

The nine heads possessed ranks that differentiated them, but at the same time, they were all heads. They were treated as equals. The organization didn’t have the structure of boss, officers and underling. This was why their ranks were described as being a bit ambiguous.

Of course, this wasn’t the immediate point she wanted to go over.

“Just say he is from the Hydrdra guild. Do you really have to speak



in such a roundabout way?”

– The person insisted I describe it like that.

“Is he next to you?”

– Yes.

“Did you secretly make some kind of deal with a head of the Hydra guild?”

– No way! I am contracted to be within the Stormhunters until 2050. I would never dare to do such an act. The other side approached me first. He wants to have a conversation about a Quest, and he asked to speak to someone of similar rank as him.

The heads of the Hydra guild was similar in rank as the Stormhunter’s guild master. Che-sulyun was the only one, who fit the description.

This was the reason why Hatch had to call her.

The problem was the fact that Che-sulyun wasn’t in a good mood.

Che-sulyun immediately answered him.



“I bet he is trying sound out the relationship between our guilds. If he wants a conversation, then tell him to go through the official channel. The one, who wants something, should be the one crawling on the floor.”

– What?

Before Hatch could reply, the call ended.

The screen immediately changed to the Youtube page she had been viewing. However, there was a slight change on the screen.

“Huh?”

He had uploaded a new video. The light within Che-sulyun’s eyes changed as she played the new video.

In the video, a User wearing a Red Skeleton set appeared. A slight smile formed on Che-sulyun’s lips when she saw the figure. When the video ended, she immediately called Hatch’s phone.

– Ah, master! He says this business is really important. I’m sure this is a negotiation regarding the Main Scenario Quest....

“I’ll take the call now, so make room for him.”

– What?



“Didn’t you say he is next to you? Give him the phone.”

After several seconds, she heard someone else’s voice.

– I’m the 5th head. We’ve acquired a crucial clue regarding the Main Scenario Quest. We want to carry out the Quest with your guild.



## Chapter 108 – Catacombs (3)

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When he was filming the Waltz video, a thought had gone through Hyrkan's mind.

‘This won't make any money.....’

However, his prediction had been very off, and he had been very happy at being proven wrong. The Waltz video allowed Hyrkan to make a leap into becoming a star.

With this as context, today's footage might be a big failure.

‘This will make me some money.’

At that moment, Hyrkan felt something entirely different from when he had filmed the Waltz video. His hunch, intuition and instinct was the polar opposite of what he had felt that time.

‘I really feel like this will be a jackpot.’

Hyrkan had finally exited the tortuous maze, and he had arrived at a new entrance.

It was the entrance to an Instant Dungeon, where he wouldn't be able to come out once he entered. It was clearly evident that this place was where the Catacomb's Stage Boss was located at.



Hyrkan didn't show any hesitation as he jumped into the stage. He didn't have any worries. He had plenty of consumable Items. Moreover, his body was itching at the thought of getting out of this boring Catacombs.

In the end, he reached a massive graveyard. The graveyard was large enough to be reminiscent of a small domed stadium. It was a cemetery filled with skeletons of Chimeras. It was also filled with the ownerless armors and weapons.

It was a Dungeon befitting the name of Catacombs. It was mass graveyard for the Chimeras.

[Who dares to wake me from my rest!]

There was an ogre here.

No, it wasn't an ordinary ogre. It was a skeleton made out of ogre bones, and it had a clear and distinct emblem... It was the trigon emblem. The ogre had a big emblem belonging to Prince Dean engraved on the chest armor it was wearing.

[What are the Guards doing?]

Its voice was very menacing, and it let out a roar. The ogre skeleton's right hand held a fearsome and large iron mace. Its left held a weird looking lantern. It was a gem hanging on a chain, and it was giving out a purple light.



Even at this point, Hyrkan's intuition still hadn't thought this would be a jackpot. Hyrkan was trying hard to come up with a method that'll allow him to dispose the Catacomb's Boss Monster and the Guards.

It happened at that moment.

[You disgraceful bastards! Get up! Get up and get rid of this being, who interferes with my rest!]

The Gem Lantern held by the Catacomb Guardian let out a powerful purple light. Something akin to ghosts started to exit out of the purple light, and it was being absorbed into skeletons scattered in the surrounding.

At that moment, Hyrkan had a hunch.

‘Maybe?’

This Boss Monster's special ability was quite clear.

It was a type that can summon Skeleton underlings. Basically, this type of monsters were labeled Lich style monster. They were pretty rare to come across, but they weren't an anomaly. They weren't that special.

This would be true if the opponent hadn't been Hyrkan.



‘Finally, I’ve finally achieved a great Matchup.’

He was Warlord’s best Necromancer, and he was a new breed of Necromancer.... He was the Hahoe Mask Hyrkan, who had founded the Hahoe Mask style.

‘This is a really big Match up.’

If these confluence of factors weren’t present, this battle wouldn’t have been given any special meaning by Hyrkan.

‘I can get 10 million at the very least.’

Since he was the Hahoe Mask, this Boss Raid was special. It’ll be memorable one.

It was a battle between the Lich Style Boss Monster and the Hahoe Mask Necromancer. If one was fan of the Hahoe Mask and a fan who enjoyed watching Warlord, this was a matchup impossible to ignore.

[You bastard. You will pay the price of waking me from my rest!]

Hyrkan let out a roar, then he let shouted towards the Catacomb Guardian.

“You’ll make me pay the price? How dare you! I am the Hahoe Mask, yet you want to make me pay?”



Hyrkan spoke his line as he acted out the scene.

This battle would be worth a lot. This was why he had to act cool and act the part!

Of course, he regretted saying it the moment the words left his mouth.

‘Those lines didn’t sound too great. It’s embarrassing.’

Of course, an NG was always possible in acting. With the Catacomb Guardian letting out its angry words in front of him, Hyrkan earnestly thought about his new lines.

‘Yes. This is it.’

He finally came up with a new line. Hyrkan made a pose, and he once again yelled out his words.

“A price..... You will feel it in your bones as to who I am.”

The line he gave was still very corny.

However, there was a smile on Hyrkan’s lips as if he liked the line he gave.



‘Feel it in your bones! That’ll be a famous line.’

If a screenwriter could look into Hyrkan’s heart, he would have a dumbfounded expression on his face.

Hyrkan was oblivious to this fact. He was drunk on his own words. Of course, he did what he had to do even if he was drunk.

[Kill the one, who interferes with my rest!]

It had already prepared itself for battle. Ten Chimera Skeleton was staring at him. In a flash, Hyrkan held a gem in his hand. He closed his fist as if he was trying to squeeze the gem.

Drip drip!

Bright light came out of the gem as it dripped to the floor.

Koo koo koo!

The gem was absorbed into the floor, and the ground started to shake. Dirt shot up, and a golem that was as big as the Catacomb Guardian appeared.

The Golem looked like an ogre. On top of that fact, the ogre possessed two heads.



It was the Twin Head Ogre.

It was a level 110 Boss Monster, and amongst the Users, it was known to be the most difficult Ogre to deal with. It was considered to be one of the strongest Ogres in this this game.

This was obvious, but the ingredient gem of this monster was incredibly expensive. The price of a gem differed by 500 gold depending on its scarcity.

‘My one month food money was blown in one shot.’

Hyrkan had saved this one for emergency. He really didn’t want to use this one. He prayed that he’ll never encounter a situation where he would have to use it. He kept it close to his bosom as if it was a golden ingot.

‘All right. Let’s just do this.’

However, at that moment, Hyrkan erased all thoughts about money from his mind.

He painted a picture in his mind.

After he summoned the Twin Head Ogre, he immediately scattered 10 Skeleton Fragments on the floor. He summoned 10 Skeleton with a picture in mind.



The Catacomb Guardian had also summoned 10 Chimera Skeletons.

With each ogre as the commanders, the Undead units faced each other.

This was like the scene where actors were getting ready for a full scale battle.

Then Hyrkan flicked his finger twice to give the cue.

This was the sequel hit after the Waltz video. It was the start of the ‘Battle of the Bones.’

The first clash was a landslide victory for Hyrkan. The Skeleton Warriors received the Skeleton Knight’s buff and the Skeleton Science’s effect. Moreover, the Skeleton Warriors were fully equipped, so they were like nightmares for the Chimera Skeletons.

Moreover, the Catacomb Guardian merely stood in the back as it directed the battle. On the other hand, the Twin Head Ogre golem used both of its hands to swing its enormous club. It ruthlessly pummeled the Chimera Skeletons. The Chimera Skeleton’s heads flew into the distance like a baseball.

[How laughable!]

When the first charge ended, the Catacomb Guardian swung his Gem Lantern once again. Another twenty Chimera Skeletons



appeared.

Hyrkan once again matched their numbers. He summoned additional Skeleton underlings. There were three Skeleton Magicians mixed in with the group.

They wore luxurious robes, which was embroidered with numerous symbols. They held an expensive staff with a gem embedded on the top. The addition of the Skeleton Magicians allowed Hyrkan to win in a bigger landslide.

Three Skeleton Magician threw massive fireballs, and it ruthlessly crushed the Chimera Skeletons, who were lined up for battle. Their battle line was broken, and the Skeleton Warriors waded in as they went berserk. If this game was an AOS game instead of a RPG, a firework would have exploded atop the Skeleton Knight with the word pentakill.

[Stupid bastards!]

The Catacomb Guardian swung its Gem Lantern once again. Its third unit was summoned. It summoned 30 Chimera Skeletons this time.

Now the Catacomb Guardian held the numerical advantage.

[I'll do this myself!]

The Catacomb Guardian had been hanging back until now, but



the Catacomb Guardian moved forward as it easily shook its enormous mace.

When he saw this, Hyrkan raised the Ivan's Sword.

The third clash would be different from the other two. It was the beginning where the ogres would clash.

The Catacomb Guardian and the Ogre Golem unhesitatingly swung their fearsome weapons at each other.

Kwahng!

The mace swung by the Catacomb Guardian crushed a head of the Ogre Golem with a single swing.

Ggah-ahng!

The weapon swung by the Ogre Golem impacted on the side of the Catacomb Guardian's armor. It made an ugly dent.

Kahng, kahng!

The Skeletons started to fight when the clash between the ogres started. Their weapons were impacting on each other's armors, so the surrounding was filled with the sound of steel impacting on steel. The sound itself increased the confusion one felt.



However, Hyrkan was moving covertly and swiftly through this racket. He approached the rear of the Catacomb Guardian. Within the melee, Hyrkan accurately found the right path. He moved through the melee almost like he was threading a needle. He was able to reach the rear of the Catacomb Guardian too easily.

However...

[How laughable!]

The Ogre Golem was exchanging blows with the Catacomb Guardian, and neither combatants were retreating. However, the Catacomb Guardian must have felt Hyrkan's approach, and its voice stabbed into Hyrkan's ears like a knife.

[The Catacomb Gem Lantern is letting out a bleak Energy.]

[The Catacomb Gem Lantern's curse has seized you.]

The Announcement was heard immediately.

It was an automatic curse that activated based on proximity of the User. Moreover, it wasn't a curse targeted at a specific user. The Catacomb Guardian activated its special ability, which was an AOE.

‘How laughable.’



However, Hyrkan wasn't surprised or taken aback. Instead, he put on a bloody smile.

As he put on the bloody smile, he chewed on one of the three candies in his mouth.

[‘White Imoogi’s Eye Candy’ has blocked the curses effect.]

He had put a consumable Item in his mouth, and it would help him block any debuff skills like the curse. This was the most basic strategy used by a Striker.

Of course, Hyrkan knew about the basics. The Catacomb Guardian’s curse didn’t take hold on Hyrkan. Hyrkan used his quick movements to attach himself on the back of the Catacomb Guardian.

Thanks to Twin Head Ogre Golem’s strike denting the armor, Hyrkan was able to climb it easily. As the unofficial V Gear climbing world record holder, this was like traveling in a subway. There were numerous places to grip.

After grabbing a hand hold, Hyrkan immediately stabbed the Ivan’s Sword into one of the dents.

Kah-ahng!



The armor was unexpectedly sturdy. He needed to break through this armor for his Curses to take hold. It was an annoying development.

However, Hyrkan immediately stabbed the Ivan's Sword to the same location he had stabbed before.

Chee-jeek!

No, he didn't stab it. He had scratched out an X on the surface of the Catacomb Guardian's armor.

[Catacomb Guardian was afflicted with the Demon Curse.]

[Catacomb Guardian was afflicted with Slow Curse.]

[Catacomb Guardian was afflicted with Corrosive Ghost.]

[Catacomb Guardian was afflicted with Darkness.]

[Catacomb Guardian was afflicted with Lethargy.]

The Curses swirled around the Catacomb Guardian's entire body.

'Voodoo Pictograph is great. It's a great skill.'

He didn't have to wound his opponent's body. He just had to draw a predetermined shape, and it would grant Curses to the opponent. It was thanks to the effect of a Skill called 'Voodoo Pictograph'.



It was a Skill he earned as a Quest Reward, and it was a Rare Rank Skill.

[I don't believe it!]

After being Cursed, the Catacomb Guardian's body rapidly weakened. Its decline was inevitable.

Hyrkan's Demon Curse and Slow Curse was Rank A. The Corrosive Ghost was Rank B, and Lethargy was Rank C.

Moreover, his Curse Science skill had reached Rank C, so the effect and duration of the Curses increased by 12 percent.

Lastly, Hyrkan held the Ivan's Sword, which ignored the opponent's defense by 15%.

Kwah-jeek!

The third strike finally opened a hole on the Catacomb Guardian's armor.

[How dare you!]

The Catacomb Guardian raged. It roughly shook its body as it tried to dislodge Hyrkan.



However, Hyrkan wasn't some trash, who would be thrown off with such a weak shake. Moreover, its opponent wasn't Hyrkan. It was the Twin Head Ogre Golem. One of the golem's head had been crushed, but it still had one head left. The loss of one head had revealed the Twin Head Ogre's increasingly tyrannical nature. It pushed hard against the Catacomb Guardian.

Kah-ahng, kah-ahng!

It swung the club with both hands. It pounded away at the Catacomb Guardian's body like a drum. This actually caused more turbulence for Hyrkan.

Ggah-ahng, ggah-ahng!

In the midst of the turbulence, Hyrkan enlarged the hole. His vision was shaking so much that it wouldn't have surprised anyone if Hyrkan fell sick from the motion sickness. However, Hyrkan was like a master craftsman. His hand movements were precise.

He finally made a hole of his liking. It was big enough to put in as many Bone Explosives as Hyrkan wanted.

'This is a battle tactic I saved for a day like this.'

Hyrkan put the Bone Explosives into the hole.



– Kwah-ahng!

The Tablet PC was connected to bluetooth speakers, and the sound rang out in all direction. At the center of the sound of the explosion, Che-sulyun was watching raptly. She had a strange expression on her face as if she was a action movie fan watching Die Hard's explosion scene.

‘The Bone Explosives can be used that way?’

It was a scene where the Hahoe Mask had put a hole in the Catacomb Guardian's armor. The hole was filled with Bone Explosives, and they were detonated.

In all of Warlord, the Hahoe Mask was the only one capable of showing this scene. Che-sulyun couldn't pull her eyes away from the scene.

Of course, a single blow couldn't kill the Catacomb Guardian. Its armor was ruined from the Bone Explosives, but the Catacomb Guardian continued to hang on to its life.

When its HP was suddenly reduced, the Catacomb Guardian went into its next phase.

– I will not let you leave alive! Wake up! Everyone get up!

When the Catacomb Guardian went into the new Phase, it summoned 50 Chimera Skeletons. Moreover, it started letting out



a purple energy, which shaved away HP went it touched the enemy.

“You are watching that scene again, master?”

“This is the best part.”

“I know it’s a great scene, but how many times do you have to watch it??”

“It is called a great scene, because it stays cool even after you watch it again and again. Moreover, the real stuff starts after the explosion.”

Matador Chev.

He couldn’t tear his eyes away from the battle footage between the Hahoe Mask and the Catacomb Guardian. He was one of countless people, who couldn’t tear their eyes away from the footage.

‘If we immediately sell Raid Live tickets with the Hahoe Mask as the main draw, we could probably sell million tickets depending on the match up. In a year, it wouldn’t be farfetched for the Hahoe Mask will allow us to sell 10 million tickets.’

At that moment, someone who considered himself to be the cream of the crop was also watching the same vid.



“What are you looking at, Mr. Sinclair?”

“It’s nothing”

Sinclair.

Currently, he had on a V&V emblem on his chest. When the V&V guild officer asked him a question, he gave a vague answer. The V&V guild officer didn’t want to get on Sinclair’s nerves, so he didn’t repeat his question. He carefully passed on the information.

“We’ll start the raid in 30 minutes. We look forward to working with you again.”

“Yes, understood. Also, you don’t have to come look for me every time. You can just send me a message. Currently, I’m a normal member of the V&V guild.”

“Ha ha. I’m just treating you like a future guild officer.”

“Thank you.”

After exchanging a slight nod with the him, the V&V guild officer left. When he saw the back of the V&V guild officer, Sinclair turned his head to focus on the footage once again.

While he watched the footage, he admitted something.



‘That damn Hahoe Mask. I’ll admit it. He is a remarkable bastard.’

He admitted the Hahoe Mask wasn’t a normal guy. Furthermore, he admitted the Hahoe Mask wasn’t a normal User.

‘He has the ability to command others. Now he has that special quality that makes people pay attention to him.’

He accepted it, but he also became worried and guarded.

‘Maybe this guy might be a bigger threat than the 30 great guilds. If it is as expected, he possesses a massive amount of funds. The only thing he is lacking is level. If he reaches the level of the Rankers, less than 10 people in the entire Warlord could face him 1on1.’

At that moment, there was a fourth person watching the video.

“Ooh-ha-ha! It’s a jackpot! Jackpot! I knew my intuition wasn’t dead yet. Look at the view counts rise! Kyahh! I need to treat myself to some luxury on a day like this. I’ll eat until my stomach bursts!”

He put canned tuna and tofu into the Kimchi Jjigae. He brought out the tender white rice, and toasted seaweed that was glistening with oil. He sat in front of a 50 inch monitor, which didn’t suit the one room. As he enjoyed the feast, he watched a video. The main



character of the footage was Ahn-jaehyun.



# Chapter 109 – How Much? (1)

---

- Warlord Subscribers broke through 4 million users!
- Tobot Soft is making a smooth run towards number 1 in market value!
- Warlord has become more than a game one personally enjoys playing. It is the start of a new era of gaming where playing and watching the game is integrated!
- There is a rush to invest speculative capital into Warlord. Is this company worth the investment or is it a bubble?

It had been two years since Warlord had started. Warlord was closing in on its 3rd year of service, and it was worthy of having the title of being the best virtual reality game. Tobot Soft became the most profitable company amongst the game developers. The amount of money made by Tobot Soft was beyond one's imagination. The monthly fee to use the game was close to a thousand dollars, and the Users numbered in the millions. Just from the amount of money generated from the subscription fee would make anyone gasp.

On top of that, Tobot Soft's success with the V Gear series made their market value almost rival the Peach corp. Of course, Warlord's success had coincided with the increased sale of the V Gears. The two companies had a synergistic effect on each other.

Moreover, Warlord's effect on the world wasn't limited to just



that. The people who enjoyed watching Warlord was several dozen to several hundred times larger than the Warlord's user base. This created a commerce market with regards to the contents related to the game. This market might hold a much larger potential than the market for Warlord.

This was the start of a new era.

The world was surprised and taken aback at the appearance of this new era. However, they all had great expectations for it.

Of course, there was someone who was indifferent to the start of a new era.

‘The amount of money left after subtracting the V Gear's monthly installment, Warlord's monthly subscription fee, and the maintenance cost of the apartment...’

Ahn-jaehyun.

He was calm about the recent changes. To be precise, he was indifferent to it.

In truth, he didn't care about how the Warlord was changing the world. The only things that was important to him was how his presence and importance in Warlord was changing. That was it.

Even now Ahn-jaehyun was thinking of ways to increase his presence and importance in Warlord.



‘I’ve gathered a lot of money..... However, it isn’t even a drop in the bucket if I want to buy a level 150 Unique Item set.’

The problem that always got in the way of Ahn-jaehyun was money!

It wasn’t as if he didn’t have money. The problem was the market for Items in regards to the highest level Users of Warlord was absurd.

There were a lot of investors that were sniffing around Warlord and the virtual reality game market.

This resulted in the the 30 great guilds and the Users ranking from 1 to a 100 on the front page receiving an obscene amount of money. It was an excessive amount of money compared to the skill and ability of some of the Rankers.

A bubble had formed.

Of course, if all the Users was swimming in money, the bubble wouldn’t have been a problem. The inflation only happened at the top. The market for the Users outside this select group was minimally impacted by the bubble.

There was a saying in Warlord that said the Users above Ranking 100 drove German cars, and the Users below 101 drove Chinese cars.



This was why the Users in the top 100 and the experts in the 30 great guilds were able to reinvest their money back into the game. This was also the reason why the highest level Items were traded at a ridiculous price. At the same time, it created a wall for any Users outside of these groups.

‘I have to climb over it no matter what.’

Ahn-jaehyun had gone through great tribulation, so he could eventually leap over this wall. When he was given the chance, he had to jump over it. He had to do it in a single attempt. He had to accelerate than jump over it!

He couldn’t incrementally close the distance, then climb over the wall gradually in secret. If he took that approach, he would basically be shitting out a bloody stool.

‘Let’s get to level 140 first.’

“In truth, I still don’t understand it.”

Hydra guild.

It was a unique guild where nine heads represented the guild. Amongst the Warlord Users, they were viewed as an elite think tank.



They used a variety of routes to gather information, and it was something a normal User couldn't even attempt. When they gathered all the substantive datas, they used it to predict information that hadn't been released to the public, and they acted on these predictions. It was safe to say they were an elite think tank within Warlord.

If one found out about the real identity of the nine heads, one's mouth would fall open. Most graduated from named universities, and one member had already achieved great success in Silicon Valley. These individuals would never have to worry about money in their lifetime.

They were all very sharp, but not everyone here had a great academic background.

It was the second head Sohank.

He was someone that was very far from being described as an elite mind.

“Why do we have to work with those two? Didn't they steal from us? Instead of working with them, shouldn't we be finding ways to punish them?”

He was the body.

Sohank wasn't there to use his head. His role was to be the body that they could use.



In the end, Warlord was a game where everything was settled with the fist. This was why they needed a powerful fist, and Sohank was that powerful fist. This was the reason why he had become the second head. In regards to Raids and battles, he had the authority to order the 9 heads into action.

This was obvious, but an organization would be a mess if all the upper management were strong, but dumb.

Natal was the eighth head. His role was to stick close Sohank. He had to explain and convince Sohank to go along with the plan.

“We can’t repeat the mistake made with the Corrupt Count.”

“No. Those bastards stole the Corrupt Count we were going to catch!”

“They didn’t steal from us.”

“What are you saying?”

“Our enemy is the secret information dealer that gave them the information.”

Sohank had a stubborn expression on his face at Natal’s explanation. It seemed he didn’t buy the explanation.



“Still, why do we have to team up with the crazy cow and the crazy bitch, who’s like lightning? This is this and that is that.”

Natal continued to speak.

“Our goal in this Main Scenario quest is to minimize the risk.”

“How are we decreasing the risk when he work with them? In the end, wouldn’t that secret information dealer interfere with us regardless?”

“It doesn’t matter. This Main Scenario Quest is large in scale.”

“What do you mean?”

“If it is as we predicted, Prince Dean tried to use the Power of Corruption to steal the throne. At the last chapter of this Main Scenario Quest, there will be a massive war.”

“That’s true. Prince Dean is the loser from the north.”

“When the massive war occurs, it’ll barely require any prerequisites to join. There is a high possibility that it’ll allow most of the Users to participate in the Quest.”

“What? Those who didn’t finish all the prior Quests will be allowed to participate?”



“This is how Warlord will make all the Users feel like they belong to the same community. Well, when that happens, the competition will become very fierce. If it is stated that the capture of Prince Dean is first come first serve, wouldn't every dog and cow show up?”

“Before they could proceed, the dogs would fight with the cows. Both sides would eliminate each other.”

“Yes. This is why there will probably be a condition attached to fighting Prince Dean. It is more accurate to say we will be given tickets instead of a condition. The ticket will determine the order of the fight.”

As he spoke, Natal took off his glove. A gold ring appeared. Sohank discreetly twitch his finger. His finger was equipped with the same ring as Natal.

“There is a high probability that our rings are the tickets.”

Secret Society's Ring.

These rings were so surprising good that the Users, who missed out on the rings, complained to the Tobot Soft. They asked the company to delete the cheat item that broke the balance of the game. This was how much magic this ring possessed.

According to the information gathered by the Hydra guild, the Red Bulls guild and the Stormhunters possessed these rings.



“I’m sure there will probably be other items that’ll be counted as tickets.”

“I see.”

“In the end, let’s say there are 100 people with the ticket. If our side has 60 people with the ticket, we won’t be at a disadvantage no matter what happens. There’s no chance we’ll be caught off guard.”

“Ah!”

Sohank was finally able to accept the reasoning.

At that point, Natal decided to give an additional explanation.

“Moreover, if we make an alliance now, our relationship will continue into the future.”

“We have to continue our alliance with those bastards?”

“There are 30 teams in the major leagues. Everyone is making a lot of money, but the teams are divided into first, second and third class. No, it’s more like the Primeira Liga than the major leagues. Even in the same league, the broadcasting fee for Real Madrid and Barcelona can’t be compared to the other clubs. This dividing line will come to exist between the 30 guild. If we could get into a



friendly relationship with the two guilds....”

At that moment...

“Hey, wait a moment. I don’t know anything about baseball or soccer. Talk to me in terms of the NFL.”

Sohank stopped Natal from speaking further, and he made his request.

‘Damn it!’

Natal’s expression slightly hardened at Sohank’s words. He shouldn’t have brought it up. As expected, Natal had to explain it for 30 minutes before Sohank got what he was trying to explain.

[Hyrkan]

---

- Level : 140
- Title : 85
- Stats : Strength(1544)/Stamina(778)/Intelligence(915)/Magic Power(1161)

[Skill List]

- Summon
  - [Skeleton Fragment(A)], [Madness Helm(A)], [Bone Armor(A)], [Skeleton Magician(A)], [Skeleton Science(A)], [Golem Summon(A)], [Hardening(B)], [Bone Explosive(A)], [Armament(A)], [Clay Play(C)], [Skeleton Knight(B)]



– Curse

[Demon Curse(A)], [Slow Curse(A)], [Corrosive Ghost(A)],  
[Blind(B)], [Curse Science(A)], [Lethargy(A)], [Voodoo  
Pictograph(C)]

– Body Strengthening

[Skin Sewing(A)], [Leg Strength Modification(A)], [Fake  
Heart(A)], [Boiling Blood(B)],  
[Ocular Transplant (C)], Steel Bone(D)

After checking his level and Skill Tree, Hyrkan immediately opened a hologram window. He checked the content of his most recently acquired Quest.

[Find the Snake's Tail]

– Quest Rank : Unique

– Quest Level Range : 140

– Quest Content : Maeung is asking for more information. While hiding your identity, find evidence in the location indicated on the map given by Maeung.

– Quest Reward : Dungeon Map.

Maeung.

He had taken the trigon emblem he found in the cemetery beneath the Cursed Castle. He was given a warning when he brought Prince Dean's trigon emblem from the Catacombs.



– Tell no one about what you saw!

Hyrkan asked a question when he heard those words. He asked for the identity of the being behind this plot.

When asked the question, Maeung still didn't reveal Prince Dean's identity. Hyrkan was given a new Quest instead.

However, Hyrkan knew it when he received the Quest.

‘It's just around the corner now.’

When Hyrkan completed ‘Find the Snake's Tail’ Quest, the identity of Prince Dean will be revealed.

Afterwards, the Quest will progress at a breakneck speed. In truth, the only thing left was the great war against the Corrupted army led by Prince Dean.

Even if one wasn't carrying out the Main Scenario Quest, most of the high level Users could guess that the Immoral Prince episode was about to head into the Epilogue.

The Warlord didn't make the highest level Users from rank 1 to 100 visible to motivate the low level Users into leveling up. It was a barometer one could look at to see how far the game had progressed.



The Main Scenario Quest was divided by a difference of 100 levels. The Corrupt Count was from level 1 to 100. The Corrupted Count was from level 101 to 200. Of course, this was a rough estimate.

Currently, the number one Ranker was the Perfect One Sulwoo. He was level 188.

Of course, the Perfect One's level wasn't the norm. It was an anomaly. It was better to check the level of the Rank 100 User. He was around level 175.

If the situation was boiled down into simplistic terms, the Quest had progressed to around the 75% mark.

If one considered the level up pace of the Warlord Users, about 8 to 10 levels was increased per month...

‘So it'll all come to a head in about 3 months?’

The Immoral Prince episode would end within 3 months.

‘That isn't the end game. I have to aim for the important stuff.’

He had to gather strong momentum in the remaining time he had left, so he could get past the others.



‘There’s the Corrupt Judge, Hero of the Great War, and the Hiban Kingdom’s Hero.’

He was aiming for the three titles. These titles were seen as the flowers of this Main Scenario Quest.

The title of Corrupt Judge was given by the final boss.

In the great war against the Corrupted Army, 333 people with the highest merit was given the title of ‘Hero of the Great War.’

Lastly, the Hiban Kingdom’s Hero was a title that can exclusive to this battle.

Each of the title gave 5% increase to one’s Stat. These were the pinnacle of titles.

‘Then there’s the Corrupted Judge’s Accessory, Great War Hero’s Weapon....’

Then there were the Items.

Chronicle Items!

One had to participate and succeed in the Prince Dean Raid to be able to obtain the Items. Amongst the ones given the Corrupted Judge title, the Corrupted Judge’s Ring or Necklace was given out at random. These Items were Chronicle Unique Rank.



The Great War Hero's Weapon was a reward given to the Hero of the Great War. An ingredient would be given to the User, and the ingredient could be used to make any weapon one wanted. This was also a Chronicle Unique Rank Item. Moreover, the created Item was bound, but the ingredients were tradeable.

‘Then there’s the Immoral Prince series.’

The Immoral Prince Items were given to the 10 people, who had the most merit in catching Prince Dean.

The metal was earned by melting Prince Dean's armor and sword. If taken to the Blacksmith Olf, Olf personally crafts it into new Items called the Immoral Prince series. One could make a weapon or a defensive gear. The only caveat is that one can possess only one part of the series.

Moreover, the Rank of these Items was Chronicle Epic!

It was a level 200 Item, but it could be used until level 300 if one wanted to. It was that amazing.

‘I have to aim for those Items.’

Hyrkan had to aim for those Items.

He was well-qualified.



He had earned the Secret Society's Ring and the Destroyer of Corruption title. He had the qualification to participate in the Prince Dean Raid.

However, the problem remained regarding Hyrkan's level. He would only be able to participate in a support role. If he had a support role, there was no way he'll be able to gain the Immoral Prince series.

He had to become one of the leading actors.

Instead of progressing in his Quests, he had to focus on improving his Spec.

'I'll be confident in doing the Prince Dean Raid if I reach level 170....'

The level up was possible. If he gave up entirely on the progress of the Quests, he could focus solely on leveling up. If he did this, his level up pace would be on par with the Perfect One.

The problem was the fact that the level up wouldn't be enough.

'The problem is my skills.'

Hyrkan's weakness was his lack of skills.



The Curse Skill Tree of the Curse Monk was popular, so the information was widely known. The skill books were expensive, but it could be purchased.

In the case of the Summon Skill Tree, he had learned the knowledge he gained from watching Rich Lich. He knew that the Death Knight would be summoned at level 200, and he had fragmentary knowledge regarding other skills. However, this was Hyrkan's main skills, so his Skill rank and diversity of skills wasn't lacking.

The problem was the Body Modification Skill Tree.

Hyrkan's knowledge about Body Modification Skill Tree ended at the Life Vessel Skill.

Hyrkan had no idea which low rank Skills he needed or what was the minimum Rank he needed to raise the Skills to reach the Life Vessel Skill. There was also no way he would know what skill came up next.

If he really wanted a true Spec Up, he had to fill in the parts that was lacking. This would allow him to be a leading actor in the Prince Dean Raid.

‘At my current level, Ahimbree is my only choice.’

In the end, Hyrkan had one place he could lean on. It was his teacher, who was the disciple of the Grand Magus. There was only



Ahimbree!

Hyrkan started moving, so he could suck the marrow out of his teacher.



## Chapter 110 – How Much? (2)

---

When a User achieves great success in Warlord, everyone starts to comment on the reasons behind the User's success.

One of the reasons behind the success was attributed to the excellent AI making up Warlord.

This was why the Users paid much more attention to the NPCs in Warlord compared to the NPCs of other games. Of course, it wasn't as if all the NPCs were popular. If an NPC wanted to be popular, one had to fulfill one of the two requirements.

The NPC had to be either a beautiful woman or a handsome man. If not, the NPC had to have a habit of giving out good Items.

From that perspective, Ahimbree's massive popularity was inevitable. Ahimbree was an NPC that gave Items that were beyond good. It was downright amazing.

Moreover, a User named Cocomo had obtained Ahimbree's Disciple title, and it seemed he had been short on money. He sold information regarding Ahimbree, which had never been disseminated before. This drove Ahimbree's popularity into a pitched fever. Numerous Users attempted to become Ahimbree's Disciple.

At that point, the much praised AI system of Warlord did something very wise. There were too many Users visiting Ahimbree, so Ahimbree's residence was moved.



This was to Hyrkan's benefit as there weren't many obstacles when he tried to meet Ahimbree.

'Shit. If he was going to move, he should have moved up north. Why the hell did he move to the south?'

Of course, Hyrkan had been working in the North, so he had to spend a good amount of time traveling towards the south. However, this was a very minor problem.

The usual office that had always greeted Hyrkan was gone.

"Welcome."

".....your room is very clean."

The books that had been strewn about...

Unlike his previous office where the expensive Skill books had coated the floor, his current office was very clean. It was hard to find any books or even a whiff of paper inside the room.

One would never expect to feel a sense of unease when confronted with a clean room.

However, Hyrkan felt uneasy.



‘The mood is strangely cool.’

He had come here expecting to receive a delicious treat. Instead of a treat, he was worried he might have wasted his time coming here.

‘Eh-ee. At the very least, he’ll still probably give me a Skill. It isn’t as if he would only give a Skill book only if the Skill books were strewn across the floor.’

He tried very hard to push down his anxiety, and Hyrkan greeted Ahimbree.

“How’s your health and peace of mind, teacher?”

He used respectful words that he had utter to his parents before. Hyrkan looked very respectful.

However, Ahimbree didn’t answer immediately. The NPC kept staring at Hyrkan. It looked like Ahimbree was affected by a system freeze, but the manual explicitly stated that such a scenario wasn’t possible. This meant it was really having a hard time answering Hyrkan’s question. It meant Hyrkan’s action had stumped the outstanding AI. The AI was at a loss for words at Hyrkan’s absurd action.

Ahimbree opened his mouth after more time had passed.



“I’ve been well. How have you been?”

“I’ve had a lot on my plate, so I’ve been busy.”

“I’m sure your hands were full. Did you perhaps learn of any important information?”

Hyrkan was a bit worried at the question.

‘Is he fishing for something or is this just a straightforward question? Is he testing the water with me?’

Ahimbree knew Hyrkan was carrying out activities as a member of the Secret Society. This question was probably intended to ask about his activities related to the Secret Society. Moreover, Hyrkan had gained an important information recently. He had sufficient information where he could cast suspicion on Prince Dean.

If he continued this conversation with Ahimbree by telling him about the Trigon Emblem, it might be a key to opening a hidden quest.

On the other hand, he remembered the Maeung’s warning. Maeung told him to tell this information to no one.

After coming to a surprisingly difficult decision, he decided to keep his mouth shut.



“I’m still investigating. Unfortunately, I’m lacking in ability, so it is unfortunate that I can’t be of bigger help.”

“I heard about your accomplishments from Bagel. I also hear a lot of praise about you. If we have 100 men like you, we could clear the lands across the Terube Castle walls. We’ll be able to immediately occupy the lands. He wants to introduce you to Prince Dean as soon as possible.”

Bagel.

As the administrator of the Terube Castle wall, it seemed the NPC had taken a liking to Hyrkan. As someone who serves under Prince Dean as his lord, this was the highest compliment that could be given to Hyrkan.

Of course, he knew Prince Dean’s real identity, so Hyrkan could only put on an awkward smile.

“Thank you.”

Hyrkan calmly ended this particular thread of conversation with a single phrase.

“So why did you come looking for me?”

Ahimbree started the conversation in earnest. Hyrkan didn’t hide anything. He spoke immediately.



“I’m unable to carry out the Secret Society’s missions with my current level of ability. As you have done for me before, please provide me an opportunity and a stage.”

Ahimbree stared at Hyrkan when it heard his words. It was an NPC, but the light in its eyes was really strange. It really felt as if an incredible sage was seeing into Hyrkan’s heart. It almost made him believe that it wasn’t an NPC.

However, Hyrkan didn’t turn away from the gaze. The saving of one’s face and sense of shame... Those words weren’t in Hyrkan’s dictionary.

Its gaze gave him goosebumps.

Ahimbree stared into Hyrkan’s eyes as it spoke.

“You are already plenty strong. I cannot do anything for you. Moreover, don’t you already know about the methods to become stronger?”

Its words were dressed up adequately, but in the end, it meant it couldn’t provide a stage like the Battlefield from before. It basically meant Hyrkan couldn’t suck out any honey here from Ahimbree.

“I want to learn a new magic.”



Hyrkan immediately gave a straightforward comment. Even if Ahimbree had sent him to a stage like the Battlefield, Hyrkan wouldn't have gone.

“Magic isn't something that is easily earned.”

“If I wanted to take the easy road, I wouldn't have come here. Please you can give me any trials and tribulations!”

Hyrkan spoke in a sincere tone.

Of course, his inner thoughts differed from his tone.

‘Please give me an easy one. I want the really easy task. Please.’

Warlord's difficulty was almost limitless. In Warlord, an NPC of Ahimbree's stature could give really difficult Quests. Those were the ones that Users didn't even bother completing.

“You should search out the Magician's Tower. It would be better for you to ask them for help instead of me.”

Ahimbree once again expressed words that rejected Hyrkan. Maybe this was to be expected. It would be absurd to expect a free Skill at this point in the game.

‘Yes, this is the right answer.’



In the end, Hyrkan had to accept it.

‘Everything was going so well for so long that I lost myself for a moment. It was stupid of me to come here.’

The problem lay with him. He was the one who had come searching for the easiest and most obvious answer in Ahimbree.

At that moment, Ahimbree continued to speak.

“If you give a big contribution to the Magician’s Tower, the Magician’s Tower will surely give you a recompense.”

‘Huh?’

For a brief moment, Hyrkan combed through his memory. It felt as if he had heard about something similar to this before.

However, Ahimbree gave a clearer explanation before Hyrkan could search through his memories.

“The Magician’s Tower always needs a lot of help. They need testing ingredients and other various needs.”

‘Will you look at this?’

Hyrkan let out a yell of delight inside his heart. Ahimbree



couldn't directly give him a skill, but it seemed he'll be able to earn a Skill book from the Magician's Tower. From Hyrkan's perspective, he didn't care where he got the Skill book.

“Of course, their biggest need is operational funds.”

“What?”

At that moment, Hyrkan's expression did a 180.

‘Funds? What fund? I...it can't be true.’

“Donation. That is the sure fire thing they want.”

“Huhk.”

From Hyrkan's mouth, the sound of him gasping was automatically let out. Ahimbree didn't even register Hyrkan's change of countenance as he continued to speak.

“I think around 100 thousand gold should be enough. You'll be able to learn a magic befitting your level.”

“Sship? Sship? Did you just say [Sship](#)?”

Ship-mahn = 100 thousand Sship-pahl = curse word. They sound phonetically the same in the beginning. NPC thought Hyrkan was trying to curse.



His words had come out reflexively yet Ahimbree decided to react to Hyrkan's words.

“Is that a problem?”

It seemed sship had sounded like a curse word to Ahimbree. In truth, it was a form of curse word if one considered how he was feeling.

Hyrkan quickly changed his words.

“Sship..... So you were saying Sship-mahn gold would be enough?”

“That's right. A donation of that size would be plenty enough to get what you want.”

It happened at that moment.

[The Quest 'Meaningful Donation' has started.]

The critical blow was struck when the announcement rang in his ears.

Ahn-jaehyun had a cup of water in front of him, and he had his



eyes closed. Ahn-jaehyun had an outdated Tablet PC in his hand. Someone else's SNS page was open on the LCD. If one looked at the number of subscribers, it seemed the owner of the SNS page was very popular. The owner was a handsome white man with blonde hair and blue eyes.

‘Somehow, things always find a way to go sideways.’

Donation Quest.

He felt a chill run up his spine from just hearing that name.

At first, Ahn-jaehyun hadn't been too worried about the quest.

In truth, he didn't even need to think on it. It would be crazy to spend 100 thousand gold for a level 140 Skill book. Currently, the level 160 and 170 Skill Books had been released into the market. These Skill books were popular yet it was traded for a similar price. So why should he spend 100 thousand gold in buying one of the skills regarding the unpopular Black Magician Body Modification Skill Tree?

Still, he researched about the skill reward as a precaution. There might be someone, who might have finished this Quest. He decided to research into it first.

In truth, he was sure he wouldn't find a crazy bastard, who had gone through with this Quest.



Couple million people were spending quite a lot of money to play this game, and it seemed there was a User crazy enough to torch a large sum of money on such a Quest.

‘I think I regret searching for this in the first place.’

Woody.

He was a world famous singer and actor named Neal Whittaker. Woody was his name in Warlord. Amongst the worldwide celebrities, he was known to be an incredible fan of Warlord. He had played the game since the game service started, and he had poured an incredible amount of money into the game. However, his level was a bit low considering how much time and money he had spent in this game. He was level 141. However, if one ranked Users on the money spent on the game, he would easily be within the top 50. His love for Warlord was that large.

At the same time, it was a twisted form of love. Woody had so much money that it pained him to not be able to surround himself with luxury items. He acted like a rich person showing off his sports car. He was someone who loved to boast about his unbridled spending on the SNS.

That guy had done the 100 thousand gold Donation Quest. As a reward, he had been able to choose a level 140 Unique Skill.

At that point, Ahn-jaehyun would have just ignored this all together. Instead of buying a Skill book with a price tag of 100 thousand, it would be more advisable and healthier for him to go a



hotel buffet, and leave after eating salad.

The problem was that this Donation Quest's reward didn't have a fixed reward. One could choose the reward.

Once one chose a Skill Tree, one will have an unrestricted view of the Skill Tree from level 1 to level 190. Then it'll allow one to choose a Skill below one's level. Since this was a level 140 Quest, the best he could choose was a level 140 Skill.

‘If I donate 100 thousand gold, I could see the little known Body Modification Skill Tree....’

The key point was the fact that he'll be able to see the entire array of his choices.

This wasn't just about gaining a skill. He would be able to find out about the entire Skill tree of his choice, and this information was a very precious information one couldn't even buy with money.

The numerous Users of this game gather fragmentary information to puzzle out the Skill Trees. It was a hard task. He'll be able to see such a Skill Tree for the price of 100 thousand gold, and it was well worth the price.

‘Shit.’

This was the reason why he was agonizing over the decision.



Of course, Ahn-jaehyun's best case scenario was for another person to confirm and reveal the Body Modification Skill Tree.

That was a pipe dream.

In the first place, Warlord's magician population was highly skewed towards white magicians. Recently, the ratio had shifted towards Black Magicians by a little bit, because of the Hahoe Mask's exploit.

He had been lucky with the Curse Skill Tree, since the Curse Monks were popular. He was able to gain enough information regarding the Curse Skill Tree. However, this wasn't the case for the Summon Skill Tree and the Body Modification Skill Tree.

In regard to the Summon Skill Tree, even the veteran Necromancers didn't recognize the Skills used by Hyrkan.

‘Our Class has that kind of Skill?’

‘What's that horn growing out of the Skeleton's head, Hahoe Mask-nim?’

The Body Modification Skill Tree was something one had to be over level 100 to obtain. This was why there weren't any information regarding this particular Skill Tree out in the open.



It was possible that there were Users, who might be aiming for a Magic Swordsman type character. In that particular situation, the Black Magician would have to advance the Body Modification Skill Tree. Hyrkan had just found a User, who had spent 100 thousand gold to progress an unknown Quest, so it wasn't too far-fetched to think that a Magic Swordsman was out there.

Still, there was no way that a User, who had spent 100 thousand gold to learn the Body Modification Skill Tree, would reveal this information to the public.

‘However, there is a possibility that this bastard might be selling snake oil. Isn't he an attention whore? If I finish the Quest and....’

Woody hadn't revealed the Skill Tree he gained in its entirety. He wrote he would reveal additional information as his number of subscribers grew. Currently, he had revealed Skills that most Users had already figured out. This was why there was a chance that this might be a stunt being pulled by Woody to gain more attention.

If Woody was lying, Hyrkan might just receive a single Skill Book for 100 thousand gold.

“Hoo-ooh.”

Ahn-jaehyun finally drank the cup of water in front of him. He downed it in one shot.

‘If this is some plot to inflate the number of subscribers, I'll kill



you 100 thousand times with my bare hands, Woody.'

He had drunk the cold water, but it was having a hard time cooling his boiling insides.



# Chapter 111 – Black Tree (1)

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1.

“I’ve heard the news. I heard you have granted a big boon to the Magician’s Tower. I heard you are helping us out in a major way.”

“Let’s just go.”

It was a very dark hallway. There weren’t any light source around, so one had to rely on the candle in one’s hand to traverse the hallway. If the stairway heading towards the lower floor wasn’t distinct, it would have been strange to see someone roll several dozen times down the stairs. Not too far ahead, one could see a spiral staircase, and the path downwards gave off an eerie atmosphere.

Two men were heading downwards.

“You are really amazing. In truth, countless people benefit from the Tower, but not even half of half of those people return the favor. You have made decision that is counter to what innumerable people chose to do. I respect you.”

“.....let’s just go in silence.”

One person was speaking in an excited manner. The other person was very severe in his countenance.



“I can’t believe you are donating 100 thousand gold. It is an amount of money that I wouldn’t even be able to gain even if I saved up for my entire lifetime. I just can’t help, but admire your ability to donate. The sight of you giving the donation so willingly is admirable.”

This was obvious, but there was no upside in walking with this character. Moreover, the small hallway made it stressful to even walk here, so the NPC’s excited voice grated on his nerves.

“It’s 100 thousand gold. I can’t believe...”

In the end, he exploded.

“Dude.”

“Yes?”

“Let’s just hurry up and go.”

He growled out his words like a wild animal. It was hard to even call it words.

NPC Peun of the Magician’s Tower tilted his head in confusion instead of being surprised. This User had voluntarily given up an enormous amount of gold to the Magician’s Tower, so Peun didn’t know why Hyrkan was angry at him.



It was a reaction that stoked Hyrkan anger. Eventually, Hyrkan spoke one more time.

“I’m in a very foul mood, so shut the hell up.”

“Ah, yes.....”

Peun finally comprehended Hyrkan’s feelings, so it shut its mouth. After the NPC shut its mouth, its expression worsened considerably. Peun’s affinity toward Hyrkan had been very high, but this conversation had pretty much bottomed out that affinity.

Hyrkan was well aware of this fact.

However, Hyrkan didn’t care about Peun’s affinity towards him.

‘Why did a bastard like this have to stick to me... I’m already going nuts from the stomach ache caused by this.’

It hadn’t been easy to gather 100 thousand gold for the donation.

Of course, if Hyrkan sold all the Items he had on, he could easily get over 100 thousand gold. Even now the Skeleton were equipped with gears that was each worth an expensive bike.

In the real world, it was hard to find a rich person sitting on a huge amount of cash. Similarly, it was hard for Hyrkan to immediately gather 100 thousand gold. The selling of his Items



would be a last resort. However, even if he did decide to sell his Items, it wasn't as if he would be able to get fair market price on all of them.

It was also difficult to purchase the gold through cash. He couldn't purchase 100 thousand gold in one sitting. When he saw the additional fees that was deducted at each transaction, Hyrkan truly felt frustrated.

Anyways, he cleaned out everything he could give up to reach the 100 thousand gold. He even emptied the money he had set aside for his payment and maintenance fee for the V Gear. He also emptied next month's subscription fee. Of course, he emptied his food money too. He stocked up on a lot of delicious ramen, cheap coffee and grape candies.

There was no way Hyrkan would be in a good mood. Hyrkan wouldn't have reached this point if such things didn't bother him.

He followed after the quiet Peun. Hyrkan sharpened the knife before his inside could rot away.

'If he really was lying, I'll hit him an amount equal to his likes on his video. Every time he gets an additional like, I'll beat him to death again.'

Bbah-dook, bbah-dook.

The sound of Hyrkan grinding his teeth filled the silent hallway.



2.

“Which Tree Map do you want?”

After descending the numerous steps, they reached a space where not a single iota of light reached. It was an underground cell. It felt as if he was being sent to an underground prison for donating 100 thousand gold.

Moreover, unlike before Peun spoke with a very cold voice.

‘Patience. Be patient.’

His temper was worsening considerably. He pushed down his anger as he replied with his choice.

“Body Modification.”

“Black Magic Body Modification. Please wait a moment.”

After several minutes, Peun opened the door once again, and it gave Hyrkan a scroll. The scroll was large enough that the sides of the scrolls were protruding even as Preun carried it with both hands.

“I’ll return in 30 minutes. Please come to a decision before then.”



Peun handed over the scroll then it immediately left the room.

Then....

Ddoo-roo-roo, kwahng, kwahng!

The sound of several locks turning roughly assaulted Hyrkan's ears. Hyrkan smirked.

‘It feels like I’m paying them to treat me like an inmate.’

“Hoo-ooh!”

He wiped the smirk off his face, and a long sigh immediately escaped his mouth. Several emotions were mixed in with the sigh.

He was sighing because he had paid 100 thousand gold to see this old scroll. He was also sighing in relief, since it seemed Woody hadn't lied.

Then there was the final feeling...

‘Shit. If I see something I like, I bet I'll once again empty out my account to buy it.’

Seeing is wanting.



There might be some amazing skill he hadn't known about in the Body Modification Skill Tree. Eventually, he knew he'll be tempted to buy it, and he would inevitably have to fork over a massive amount of money. He was worried about the future, so he let out a sigh of worry.

As the sound of his sigh made up the background noise, Hyrkan opened the scroll. He kept unfurling the scroll, but it abruptly came to an end. It was like unfurling a toilet roll, and the scroll ended at the level 190 Skills. It looked like the one half of a scroll.

Level 200.

It basically meant it won't be able to show him the Skills one receives after the 2nd Advancement.

'I paid 100 thousand gold. Couldn't they have shown me the 2nd Advancement skills too? Are they perhaps going to ask me for another 100 thousand golds later to see it?'

Hyrkan spoke in a brusque manner.

Of course, the light in Hyrkan's eyes was more serious than ever. He quickly looked through the Skill Tree.

He had been given 30 minutes. He had to identify all the Skills he didn't know about in the Body Modification Skill Tree. On top of that, he had to choose a skill he needed.



First, Hyrkan checked the level 190 Skills.

‘There are two level 190 Skills.’

There was a level 190 Normal Rank Skill and a Unique Rank Skill. There were a total of two Skills.

These two Skills were the pinnacle of the Skill Map he could see. These two fruits had numerous roots branching out towards the bottom.

There was the normal Rank Skill [Golden Tattoo]. It was the skill above Skin Sewing. The location where the Golden Tattoo was placed increased the defense of that region. One had to use a gold type Item coin, and the ingredient would be destroyed once the new tattoo was placed. It was a consumption type skill.

‘Why do all these skills require spending of money?’

There was a Unique Rank Skill called the [Piercing Pocket]. One could create holes in one’s body, and consumable items like Skeleton Fragment and Bone Explosives could be stored inside these holes. Basically, it would make one’s body into something akin to a drawer.

‘That’s not too bad.’



The Skill was unexpectedly decent. If he could store it inside his body, there was a very low chance he could lose his Items. This was a problem for Hyrkan, who had to carry so many things into battle.

Moreover, it was a Skill that reeked of being specifically made for a Necromancer. He could use his body as a chest of drawers? This wasn't something that couldn't be done in reality, but Warlord allowed for such customizability.

‘Won't it be cool to open up my forearm, and take out a lot of Bone Explosives?’

For a brief time, he forgot about the fact that he had to give a payment of 100 thousand gold for this opportunity. The desire to purchase these Skills overrode his previous emotions. Currently, the Body Modification Skill Tree Map was like a home-shopping commercial for him.

‘This is?’

A Rare Rank level 160 Skill called the [Black Heart] drew Hyrkan's attention the most.

‘.....it exists.’

Hyrkan touched his Skill Window to read a detailed description of the Skill. The hologram window floated on top of the old scroll. Hyrkan's gaze planted itself squarely on the Skill's effect.



– Magical Energy is consumed to increase Strength.

‘Even the Black Magician Class has a Magic Swordsman type skill.’

The Skill allowed one to consume magical energy to strengthen the User’s physical ability. It wasn’t a unique skill. In the White Magician’s Body Research Skill Tree, there existed a level 100 Skill called the [Body Revolution]. It allowed for a very similar effect.

The [Body Revolution] Skill allowed one to swap Intelligence Stat with Strength Stat and vice versa. This skill was the reason why White Magician’s were the best at surviving, and as a magician, they had developed a unique style of Magic Swordsman.

The Magic Swordsman Style used Body Research and Transcendence Magic. It was a style that utilized these two Skill Trees as their main power. The Body Research was akin to the Body Modification. The Transcendence Magic were Buff type magic.

The Magic Swordsman style was unexpectedly very popular. Most of Warlord’s monsters targeted the magician when hit with magic. This style used this fact against the monster. A talented Magic Swordsman was very good at Aggro Control.

There was no Class that could rival the Magic Swordsman at the job of luring monsters. They weren’t great at one thing, but they were able to carry out various roles. In a Raid where there were multiple opponents, a skilled Magic Swordsman was valuable.



This didn't hold true for the Black Magicians as they didn't have a Sword Magician type. Black magic had a debuff magic of Curse rather than the Buff Magic of Transcendence.

‘It is less effective, but.....’

Of course, the [Black Heart] allowed one to burn magical energy to increase one's Stat, so the effect wasn't that great. Moreover, wasn't magical energy the lifeline of the Necromancer class? It wouldn't be much help to Hyrkan.

However, the important part for him was the fact that there was a branch heading upwards.

There was a higher level Skill that was better than the [Black Heart] skill.

He didn't know what it was, but he was well aware of the implications. At the very least, he thought about the possibility.

‘I hope I'm not going to have to spend all my money on buying the skill books in the future. Shit. It isn't as if I can resell Skills like Items....’

Of course, there were other implications too.



[Life Vessel]

– Proficiency : Rank F

– Skill Effect : When the skill is activated, Stamina is increased by 500 points. However, when the Life Vessel is activated, any type of Stamina recovery skill will not work on the User.

After reading the description for the Life Vessel skill, Hyrkan had an expression as if he had just eaten a rotten egg.

‘It was a skill I had been pining for, but I never expected to gain it by giving away 100 thousand gold.’

Life Vessel Skill recovered a portion of one’s Stamina in a flash. It was one of the best skill for him. He had wanted it no matter the cost. However, he never expected that price to be 100 thousand gold.

If Rich Lich was given the choice of purchasing Life Vessel for 100 thousand gold, even he would have probably balked at the price.

Hyrkan shook his head from side to side as he closed the Skill Window.

‘Yes. I’ll just think of it as an investment for the future. Isn’t this is better than investing in some weird company?’



He tried hard to derail his thoughts away from the cost. Hyrkan once again went through his immediate goals.

His Level Up was important. At the very least, he had to be level 160 to participate in earnest at the Immoral Prince Raid. If he wanted to be on the safe side, he had to reach level 170.

If he wanted to achieve this, he had to choose the right hunting ground. Hyrkan knew many hunting grounds that was good for leveling up. However, he had to worry about how many people used the hunting ground, and how much money he would be able to gain from filming in that location.

‘Where would be a good spot?’

There weren’t that many likely spots that fulfilled those requirements.

However, a past relation solved Hyrkan’s problem for him.

4.

[Your Level has increased.]

After he finished leveling up, Hyrkan immediately checked the



caller ID.

‘Who the hell just called me?’

There was nothing worse than getting a call during a hunt. Hyrkan had a thunderous expression on his face as he checked his caller ID. If this was about something trivial, he planned on blocking this number from ever calling him.

However, Hyrkan’s expression quickly changed when he saw the owner of the number. Hyrkan immediately dialed the number.

– Were you in the middle of a hunt? If you had been in a hunt, I’m sorry for the distraction.

“What is it? I never expected you to contact me again.”

It had be awhile since he had heard the voice of the Whistling Pitbull.

‘What is really going on?’

Hyrkan had been surprised when he suddenly received a call from Whistling. He had given his number to the Whistling Pitbull, but the Pitbull had never contacted him until now. Of course, there hadn’t been any reason to contact each other. Whistling and Hyrkan walked roads that was too different from each other. Both of them understood this truth.



This was why Hyrkan contacted him immediately even if he had just leveled up. A User usually checked one's Stats first when one leveled up.

If the caller had been someone unimportant, he wouldn't have even called back to spite the User for interfering with his hunt. Hyrkan was someone who would absolutely do such a thing.

– May you help me?

Whistling words were something he would have never expected. Hyrkan struggled with his thoughts for a brief moment.

‘He is asking for my help?’

Whistling was part of the Fighters guild. Since he was asking for Hyrkan's help, this meant he was asking for a personal favor.

“Is it related to the Elves?”

Since this was Whistling's personal matter, there was a high possibility that this was related to the Elves.

– You picked up on it immediately.

It was as Hyrkan predicted. Hyrkan's continued to hypothesize as he spoke.



“If you require my help, then this must be something really hard. I’ll hear you out first. I’ll determine if this is worth me helping you.”

In truth, Hyrkan planned on turning down Whistling. Whistling’s words wouldn’t change his mind.

‘I don’t have time to help out on an Elf related Quest.’

He felt apologetic towards Whistling, but he had suspended even the Main Scenario Quest for his Level Up. He couldn’t waste his time on someone else’s Quest.

At that moment, Whistling asked Hyrkan a Question.

– Do you perhaps know about the Black Tree?

“Uh?”

Hyrkan’s reaction was weird.

“Could you repeat what you just said? It’s loud where I’m at. What did you say again?”

– Do you know about the Black Tree??



“Black Tree? Is it a monster’s name? Or is it a landmark?”

Hyrkan answered as if this was the the first time he had heard the word. However, Hyrkan’s expression indicated otherwise. He was excited, surprised and taken aback. Hyrkan was trying hard to hide his reaction.

‘The level 160 Rare Boss Monster Black Tree’s name had just come out of Whistling’s mouth. He is really like the namesake of Pitbull. He had bitten into something really big. Maybe I should have named my nickname after a dog too.’

Hyrkan had the opportunity to capitalize on a reward for his past good deeds.



# Chapter 112 – Black Tree (2)

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5.

Whistling.

His story started right after he parted ways with Hyrkan.

– I did what I said I would do. I stayed behind the Baheim tribe's town, and I did every Quest available to me.

The Baheim tribe had a significant number of Elven NPCs, so Whistling had been very busy doing the Quests.

At first, Whistling had done much lower level Quests compared to his current level. It didn't move the needle in increasing his level or profit. However, he reached a point where he was receiving Quests that was great help to his Level Up.

At the same time, he was able to gain numerous Titles. This was the reward for digging a deep well. He had received a good amount of rewards.

– I was somehow able to earn the Title 'Baheim Tribe's Tree'. When I earned the Title, the other Elven tribes also asked for my help.

Whistling had obtained one of the ultimate Titles that increases



All Stats by 3%..

When he received the Baheim Tribe's Tree Title, Whistling started being treated like a very competent problem solver. He provided solutions to the Elven Tribe's problems. This resulted in other Elven Tribes asking Whistling for help. This was the fantasy adventure he had pined for, so he didn't turn down any requests sent his way.

– That is when I received a request from the Tehkee Tribe. I earned the Curse of the Black Tree Quest.

Currently, the Tehkee Tribe had come to Whistling, they wanted him to take care of the Black Tree's Curse. However, he was unable to carry it out.

The Quest itself wasn't some insanely hard puzzle. It didn't require endless grind either.

– I've already found out what the Black Tree's Curse is, and I've also found out the location of the Black Tree. It hadn't been too hard to find it.

On the other hand, the Quest had come to a full stop at carrying out the last part of the Quest.

– The problem is I can't catch the Black Tree by myself. I tried it just in case, but I couldn't come up with an answer.



If he wanted to put a period to the Quest, he needed help. Moreover, he needed someone who could carry out a Boss Monster Raid.

– Currently, I’m at Puree Forest where the Tehkee Tribe is located at.

When he heard those words, Hyrkan was able to accurately assess the situation in his mind.

“The Puree Forest is in the Big Smile guild’s territory. So that’s why you contacted me.”

The Puree Forest was a level 130 hunting ground, and it had been discovered first by the Big Smiles guild. Moreover, the Big Smiles guild built a village at the entrance of the Puree Forest. Naturally, everyone came to accept that the Puree Forest was under the territory of the Big Smiles guild.

Of course, it was Big Smiles’ territory, but it wasn’t as if they acted like tyrants. The Puree Forest wasn’t worth that much to act that way there. Whistling had been soloing inside the Puree Forest, but no one from the Big Smiles bothered him.

Soloing was ok, but it would be a problem if a different guild operated within the forest.

In addition, the only place Whistling could ask for immediate help was the Fighters guild. However, they were an Underfoot



guild, and they were rumored to be gunning for Big Smile's position in the 30 great guilds. Big Smiles wouldn't welcome it if the Fighters Guild appeared in their territory. On the other hand, the Fighters guild had no reason why they should take that the risk to help Whistling. Whistling was a regular guild member only in name. Moreover, his fame had diminished recently, so they didn't show much interest or love towards Whistling.

– My personal connections doesn't reach that far, so you are the only one I could request for help.

This was the reason why Whistling had contacted Hyrkan.

‘It couldn't have been easy for him.’

After hearing the whole story, Hyrkan started thinking hard on it.

There were two reasons that put him in a bad mood. The first reason was the Big Smiles guild.

‘I don't know what those bastards are thinking.’

He definitely had to resolve his unknown issue with the Big Smiles. He wasn't too happy about boldly going into their territory by himself.

‘Moreover, Black Tree isn't easy to catch.’



The second reason was the difficulty level of the Black Tree. Black Tree was a really valuable monster. It was very difficult to catch it.

‘The Black Sap is too troublesome.’

Black Tree looked like a normal tree on the outside. It wasn't black at all in its appearance. However, it was named the Black Tree, because it let out a Black Sap when it was injured.

When one touched the Black Sap, it ate away at one's HP. However, the Black Sap was neither a poison nor a magic. He would have preferred it if it had been a poison. In that case, he could have used an antidote magic or he could have easily taken care of the situation by wearing an Item Setting that was highly resistant against poison. However, the Black Sap ignored any physical barrier and magic as it gave damage.

It wasn't as if the damage was weak. One had to have Stamina akin to a Tanker or one's HP would drop in an instant like a bad stock.

On top of all of that, the Black Tree's Bark boasted a very high defense against physical and magical attacks.

The raid method was to attack the knotholes. The knothole had a very low defense, so one had to focus on taking off the Bark covering the knothole. Then all of one's attack had to be directed towards that single location.



This was obvious, but the Black Sap appeared the moment one stabbed the knothole. One had to widen the hole while the sap was expelled. It was a very tricky job.

If a Tanker wasn't familiar with Armor Breaking than a Striker had to take a big risk in attempting the Armor Break. It was a very troublesome job.

Of course, Warlord was a game, and there were multiple ways to Raid a Boss monster.

‘If I had the Circlet of Purification, this won't even be considered work.’

Circlet of Purification!

The Item was the master key to the Black Tree raid. The Circlet of Purification had the Option of ‘Immunity from all Negative Effect’. The Black Sap would be acknowledged as something that would cause a negative effect.

Of course, the Circlet of Purification wasn't easily obtainable. It was almost impossible.

‘Shit. I went through so much hardship that time. Shouldn't it have at least given the Item to me as a courtesy?’



After Hyrkan had finished the Corrupted Elf Quest, it was required of him to return the Circlet of Purification. He had held out hope for the Item, but the Chieftain of the Baheim Tribe didn't give the Circlet of Purification nor a useful Skill Book to him.

On a side note, the Ingredient Coins and Gems from the Black Tree could be used to make Rare Rank Items. When one wore the 5 parts Black Tree set, the Option of 'Black Sap' was activated. When the defensive gear was damaged, the armor would let out the Black Sap. It would eat away at the opponent's HP if the Black Sap makes direct contact. .

It wasn't as good as the Greestone Imoogi set, but it was still a great Option.

On top of that, the Black Tree was a large monster. A lot of Ingredient coins was given when the Black Tree was caught, and there was a large probability of receiving the Ingredient gems.

A single Black Tree allowed one to be able to form 3 to 4 parts to the whole set. If one hits the jackpot, one would be able to create more than that.

“Let me ask you one thing”

– You can ask as many as you like.

“What if I do catch the monster called the Black Tree? What's my cut?”



– If you can catch it, you can have everything. I won't be able to catch it anyways without your help, Hahoe Mask.

‘His words is making this decision much harder.’

The risk was large, but the return was large too. Of course, he was conflicted.

It was as if Whistling had read Hyrkan's heart.

– If you want it, I can give you this Quest's reward.

Whistling landed a solid blow on Hyrkan's shaking heart. Hyrkan fired back with a question.

“What's the reward?”

– It says it'll give me a pouch.

“Pouch? What kind of pouch?”

– I have no idea. However, Chieftain Drah did say that it will help me dispel the Black Tree's Curse. If you can dispel the Black Tree's Curse, you can have this pouch.

Hyrkan's brain started to spin quickly.



“Drah? Do you mean the Chieftain of the Baheim tribe?”

– That’s correct.

“Do you perhaps know what the pouch looks like?”

– It is a very plain pouch. There isn’t anything special characteristics I can describe to you.

“What’s in it?”

– There’s some unknown silver liquid in there. I don’t know how to use it, so I’m just keeping it in there.

As Hyrkan’s brain spun quickly, he gave a very quick answer.

“You stay right there! I’ll immediately ride my Golem over there, and I’ll blast the Black Tree’s head away!”

6.

A small village had been built at the entrance of the Puree Forest. There weren’t even buildings built within the wooden barricade. Users were the only ones within the enclosure. It was so shabby that it was hard to call it a village.



Amongst the run down place, the Big Smiles' guild members were present.

They were basically guards dispatched to look out for potential trouble. They were the lookouts.

Since they were actual Users being chosen to be a look out in a game, they felt crappy. They were basically wasting their time here. Time was EXP and EXP was Level. There was nothing that felt worse in Warlord than wasting one's time.

“Did you see the newest video? It's the Red Bulls Raid video.”

“I saw it. It was awesome.”

“What is up with our guild in comparison to that guild? I should have gone for Red Bulls instead of Big Smiles.”

Of course, these were the words that came out of the dissatisfied guard.

“Hey. Watch your mouth.”

“Who cares? No one here will tattletale on us, and it isn't as if I'm saying anything wrong.”

“Still, you should be careful.”



“You worry too much. Anyways, do you really think the Hahoe Mask is Red Bulls’ hidden ace?”

Even a king’s pumpkin seed was peeled when no one was looking. However, at his comrade’s warning, he discreetly changed the subject. His partner immediately took up the thread of the conversation.

“If it’s true, it’s big news. If the Hahoe Mask was added to the Red Bulls’ 1st Raid team, they’ll be able to take down all the monsters that’s been discovered. That’s the truth.”

“The Hahoe Mask is really awesome. He’s doing everything by himself. He doesn’t even need to enter into a guild.”

“It’s possible for him to do that, because he has money. I heard a rumor that said his family is incredibly rich. He is hiding his face, because he is the son of a mega millionaire. People will probably recognize his appearance.”

“As expected, money is everything. If I was the son of a wealthy person, I would put pressure on the Big Smiles with money to gain an officer’s seat in the guild. Then I would be able to do whatever I want to do inside the game.”

“I’m jealous. The Hahoe Mask could buy anything he wants to eat, and he purchases whatever he wants inside the game.”

It happened at that moment...



“Excuse me.”

The User spoke to notify the two of his presence. The two guards, who had been carrying on their conversation, tensed up a little bit. They looked at the approaching User in a guarded manner. It wouldn't be good for them if someone heard the content of their conversation. It was a justified response.

However, their wariness was squashed when they saw the other User's face.

‘What the hell? He looks like a pushover.’

‘He has a really soft face.’

The User that appeared possessed a face that was very relaxed and soft.

“What is it?”

The Big Smiles' guild members immediately relaxed, and they spoke as if they were talking to someone inferior to them. There was no indication of suspicion in their manners.

“I'm planning on hunting inside the Puree Forest. Do I have to make a reservation or wait for my turn?”



There was nothing suspicious to his questions. Even a large hunting ground had prime spots, and these prime spots were popular.

“The normal hunting region has a designated hunting time. It isn’t crowded enough where you would have to wait in line.”

The guard gave an immediate answer.

“Are the Big Smiles guild perhaps getting ready for a large scale hunt?”

This question was a bit more sensitive in nature.

“Why do you want to know that?”

In truth, the Big Smiles guild weren’t occupying the Puree Forest for the profit it generated. This place was kept for leveling up. The guild members of the Big Smiles would come here for a smooth hunt.

“Of course, I’m trying to avoid getting in the way of the Big Smiles guild’s business.”

From a normal User’s perspective, it would be best if one’s activities didn’t intersect with the Big Smiles guild. This was why one had to plan with the traffic in mind.



However, guild members of the Big Smiles wasn't obligated to tell everyone of their schedule.

"We are having a group hunt in 3 hours. You should plan accordingly to get out of our way."

If the User didn't have such a disarming face, the guard would have never answered that question.

"In three hours..... Thank you."

The User gave his farewell, and he disappeared. The two guards continued their conversation immediately.

"Why'd you tell him about what we are going to do?"

"Does it matter in the end? At a glance, he looks like someone afraid of unwittingly offending our guild. We have to help the less fortunate."

"He looked and acted like a pushover. I'll be really frustrated if a party member like him is in my group."

"He looks like a burden."

They laughed as they spoke. It didn't take long for them to forget about the User.



“It’s been awhile.”

Whistling Pitbull greeted Hyrkan, who appeared with his Hahoe Mask on. However, Hyrkan didn’t return the greeting.

“Let’s cut the long chatter. We are moving immediately. The members of the Big Smiles are doing a large scale hunt in three hours.”

Hyrkan wanted an all-out attack at once.

Whistling asked in surprise at Hyrkan’s words.

“Three hours? How did you find out about it?”

“I asked the question to the Big Smiles’ guild members residing in the village. They told me pretty readily.”

“That’s fascinating. I tried to ask them a question, but they became guarded at just my greeting. They looked as if they were going to fight me.”

Whistling tilted his head in puzzlement, since he didn’t know why they had responded that way to him. Hyrkan didn’t know whether he should laugh or cry. Hyrkan knew better than anyone else why the members of the Big Smiles guild had told them about



their planned activities.

This was why he decided to bury that particular topic.

“That’s enough talking. Three hours isn’t a lot of time. Is the Black Tree located far from here?”

“With our speed, it should take us a little bit over an hour.”

If possible, Hyrkan wanted to wrap up the hunt in 3 hours then leave the Puree Forest. Nothing positive would come from meeting the Big Smiles guild.

“It’ll be very close.”

Whistling’s eyes narrowed when he heard Hyrkan mumbling to himself.

“Do you have some enmity with the Big Smiles guild?”

“Huh?”

Hyrkan showed a slightly surprised reaction.

“No. Not really.”

Then he immediately changed his expression as he spoke his



denial.

“What made you think that?”

Whistling shook his head slightly at Hyrkan’s response.

“It’s nothing. It seems I spoke something unnecessary. Anyways, is the Item within this pouch really that amazing?”

Whistling wanted to change the mood, so he took out the pouch he received from Chieftain Drah. As intended, Hyrkan’s expression changed immediately when Whistling pulled out the pouch. When Whistling handed him the pouch, Hyrkan’s expression turned covetous for a brief moment to an absurd degree. Fortunately, the Hahoe Mask hid his expression.

However, his covetous expression turned into anger.

‘I’m not part of the Baheim tribe, but I toiled to bring peace to this continent. However, they didn’t give the reward to me. Instead, they gave the Circlet of Purification to someone, who just carried out some Quests for the Tribe? That damn Baheim Tribe.’

His stomach ached from just thinking about it. He had worked as much as anyone else, yet someone else got the golden prize for reward. He was just given more work to do. Of course, it wouldn’t feel great for him.

This was why Hykran confirmed it once again with Whistling.



“You said all the Coins and Quest reward from the Black Tree hunt is all mine? Are you sure?”

At those words, Whistling vigorously nodded his head. Whistling treated this as a given, and this made Hyrkan frown. He asked another question.

“It is a bit awkward for me to say this, but are you sure this is fine? You won’t get anything.”

Was he worried about someone else?

These kinds of words was the hardest for Hyrkan to push past his mouth.

However, Whistling spoke in a very composed manner at Hyrkan’s words.

“The Black Tree’s Curse Quest has a time limit. If I don’t catch the Black Tree within the time limit, the Tehkee tribe will be wiped out from this world. I want to stop that from happening. I don’t care about the reward.”

Hyrkan didn’t say anything when he heard those words. He didn’t laugh bitterly or awkwardly. He didn’t even furrow his eyebrows. He tried hard to suppress any expression from forming on his face. If he didn’t, Hyrkan would somehow feel as if he himself was very lame.



## Chapter 113 – Black Tree (3)

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8.

Unique and Rare was not a vocabulary that the Users disliked. The word, Unique, drove people into a fervor. This was the same for Rare Boss monsters. Either the odds were very low or one had to fulfill a particular set of requirements to be able to meet a Rare Boss monster. The reward given out was proportional to how difficult it was to encounter the monster.

It gave ingredients Items with good Options, very good EXP, and rare titles.

On top of that...

“Are you thinking about uploading the hunting video again?”

Raid videos was an opportunity to bring in a lot of money.

“Of course. It’s my meal ticket.”

When he decided to commit to the Black Tree Raid, all the risk regarding the Raid was erased from his head.

Return!

Instead, Hyrkan’s head was filled with thoughts about the costs



in regards to the Black Tree. Hyrkan had carried out numerous Raids before, but the most profit he could make until now was riding on this Black Tree Raid.

This was why Hyrkan asked an indirect question.

“Is it a problem? Do you want me to edit you out? Do you want a mosaic? Or do you want a share?”

Of course, he wasn't asking those questions, because he wanted to cede those things. Still, he asked the question to confirm where he stood with Whistling.

However, Whistling shook his head from side to side at Hyrkan's questions. It was the reaction Hyrkan had wanted to see. However, instead of a smile, Hyrkan couldn't help, but feel amazed by Whistling.

‘He really is an incredible person. He is giving up everything to save the Elven tribe....’

Whistling was giving up Items and rights that was rightfully his. Of course, if one wasn't competent, it was moot point in the first place. If Hyrkan was in Whistling's shoes, he would have acted differently. If he couldn't have it, then no one could.

If some else saw Whistling's action, he would be labeled a stupid loser.



However, Hyrkan didn't even think those thought. Instead, Hyrkan felt truly amazed by Whistling's action. Even if Hyrkan died and woke up again, he would never be able to live his life like Whistling.

Whistling's action made Hyrkan's heart shake.

"If this business ends well, let's have some melon beer together."

The words that came out of Hyrkan's mouth was very rare. It was hard to hear such words from him.

Whistling answered Hyrkan with his words.

"I'll show you my battle footage."

Whistling's voice and expression was very serious. His expression was especially overwhelming. His face looked like that of a pitbull, and his face came off as menacing when his face turned serious.

Hyrkan had seen all kinds of monsters... These monsters were beyond odd. The monsters had outer appearances that was hair-raising, yet Hyrkan smiled as he killed the monster. He had thought about the Items they would give. However, Pitbull's face even made Hyrkan flinch.

Of course, Hyrkan immediately changed his mindset. He locked away such nonsensical thoughts deep within his stomach.



“All right.”

They had to make preparations for the battle. Of course, Hyrkan didn't need to see the footage. He already knew how to take down the Black Tree. However, he couldn't explain that to Whistling.

Whistling immediately showed the footage of his battles with the Black Tree.

The Black Tree was quite big. It was around 30 meters tall. If ten broad shouldered men linked hands, they would barely be able to surround the circumference of the tree. The special characteristic of this tree was the long and thick strand-like branches. It was closer to whips than tree branches.

Its attack method was quite simple. It took root into the ground, and it swung its whip-like branches towards its enemies.

It was very simple, but the power behind the strikes were enormous. The tree branch headed towards its target as it divided the wind. The sound of the strike would make anyone's neck stiffen.

Whitling had tried attack the Black Tree twice.

In the first attempt, Whistling barely dodged the rampaging tree branches. When he approached the main body of the Black Tree, he used his Charge skill to immediately close the distance. Then he



used a high level Booster skill, and the Flash Skill. These skills increased the power and speed of the sword strike. Then he used a level 150 Rare Fighter skill called Cut-Cut. He had maximized the cutting force of the sword to the extreme.

However, when the three skill combo impacted on the Black Tree's Bark, it left behind a cut that was only an inch deep.

It might be a critical wound on a human, but an attack of that caliber wasn't even considered to be a scratch.

On this second attempt, Whistling aimed for the knothole. He once again evaded the tree branches as he closed the distance with the Black Tree. Then he aimed for one of the knotholes. The wound was deep, but Black Sap exploded forth from the wound, and it coated Whistling's body.

At the same time, the Black Tree tried to shake off Whistling, who was stuck to the tree like a bug. It used its branch to send Whistling flying.

After being flung far into the distance, Whistling immediately got out of there. When he saw the Black Sap eat away at his HP, he immediately realized he couldn't catch this monster by himself.

From that point, it took him three hours before he had contacted Hyrkan.

“Its characteristic are.....”



The video had ended, and Whistling started to give a more in-depth explanation.

“I can see it for myself.”

However, Hyrkan immediately cut off Whistling with his words.

“The Tree Bark has a very high defense. Instead, we have to attack its weakness, which is the knotholes. However, if the knothole is attacked, it’ll let out the Black Sap. It is probably a poison. No, you would have just used an antidote item if it was just a simple poison. You were prepared for this possibility. This means antidote item and skill won’t work on this attack.”

Whistling was impressed at Hyrkan’s explanation.

“You are amazing. You just saw the footage once, yet you were able to come up with those answers.”

“It isn’t anything amazing.”

Hyrkan displayed an ambiguous reaction, and he immediately changed the topic towards the Raid.

“The Circlet of Purification will block any negative effect caused by the Black Sap. This is why Chieftain Drah gave you that Item.”



The solution to the biggest obstacle had already been provided.

“However, you are the only one able to equip the Circlet of Purification right now. You will have to do the Armor Breaking.”

However, the Circlet of Purification couldn't be transferred. To be precise, it returned to its liquid form when held by someone other than Whistling. This was why the Armor Breaking or the expansion of the knothole was Whistling's job.

Hyrkan's role was to occupy the several dozen tree branches, so Whistling could focus on his job.

“It won't be easy. This is especially true for you, Hahoe Mask. If the task becomes too arduous, you can just leave me behind.”

If one looked at the difficulty of their tasks, Hyrkan's role was overwhelmingly more difficult. Since Whistling had the Circlet of Purification, he had to just climb the tree to attack the knotholes. He had a body that could easily climb a cliff of 90 degree to 150 degrees. The act of climbing a tree was nothing to Whistling. Moreover, the Black Tree's Bark was so rough that one could easily find the handholds.

On the other hand, Hyrkan had to face several dozen wild tree branches. It was almost impossible to imagine how a single person could pull it off.

It was such a difficult task that Whistling had told Hyrkan to run



away if things got bad.

“Huh.”

However, Hyrkan’s reaction to Whistling’s reaction was unexpected.

“No, it isn’t really that hard...”

“What?”

Whistling was surprised. However, Hyrkan didn’t give an explanation.

“You are the one doing the hard work. My role is just to put a bow on at the end.”

Whistling soon found out the meaning of Hyrkan’s words.

9.

The process of finding the Black tree had been complicated and difficult. Just hearing about how Whistling did it made Hyrkan dizzy.

The first requirement was to receive the Black Tree’s Curse Quest from the Tehkee tribe.



However, to find the Black Tree hiding within the lush forest, one needed to find the ‘Compass Twig’.

However, one could receive this twig only if one had high affinity to the Mooah tribe.

At the same time, one needed the ‘Tree Alarm Clock’ from the Soorey Tribe to be able to wake up the Black Tree.

Of course, the order of obtaining these Items happened in reverse order. One had to increase affinity with the Soorey tribe by doing Quests related to them. This will allow one to establish a connection with the Mooah tribe. Then one would be able to receive the request from the Tehkee tribe.

If one was crazy enough to do all the Quests related to the Elven tribe, one would be able to do the Black Tree hunt. Currently, Whistling was the only User that had reached this point.

However, at that moment, Whistling was thankful that he had developed a good relationship with Hyrkan.

‘How surprising.’

At the same time, he was in awe.

Whistling had climbed up the body of the Black tree, and he was



widening the knotwholes. When he looked at Hyrkan from the side of his eyes, he saw 15 Skeleton Warriors nimbly dodging the Black Tree's branches.

Hoo-ooong!

The tree branches were letting out a heavy sound as they flew towards the 15 Skeleton Warriors. It was like watching a circus show. It didn't feel like a battle at all.

This had been the cause of Hyrkan's confidence.

Hyrkan confirmed it the moment he saw Whistling's video. The branches of the Black Tree moved slower than he had originally expected. He realized the Skeletons he had poured much effort and care into developing would be able to dodge the Black Tree's attacks.

Moreover, he had three more cards he could play aside the Skeleton Warriors to catch the Black Tree.

– The magic spells are coming. You should dodge it.

His first card was the Skeleton Magicians, who could control the aggro.

His second card was his Golem. Of course, it wasn't an ordinary Golem. When he decided to do the Black Tree Raid, he immediately bought the Ingredient Gem of a level 140 Boss monster called the



Elephant Colossus. The Elephant Colossus was a large sculpture with the head of an elephant. It had a human body with four arms. Hyrkan had used it as ingredient to the Clay Play, because this particular monster was very good at using its arms. As Hyrkan had expected, the Elephant Colossus was able to grab the tree branches, and a tug of war ensued. There were times when all four hands had grasped a tree branch each.

It was very effective.

The third card was Hyrkan himself.

Hyrkan took an active role as one of the cards. It had been about 50 minutes when the Black Tree entered into its Third Phase.

10.

‘As expected of Pitbull, he is very skilled.’

Hyrkan admired Whistling’s skill at Armor Breaking. He was giving help, but there was no reason for him to disparage Whistling’s skill.

Of course, Hyrkan knew about Whistling’s capability, but he never expected him to be so good in a Raid. Hyrkan had thought Whistling was more specialized towards PVP than Raids.

‘If his level and Items could be upgraded... No, he could get into any primary Raid teams of the 30 great guilds right now.’



Whistling's ability shined even in a Raid.

The fact that he could enter into the first team of the 30 great guilds meant that he was one of the top players in Warlord. However, this person had faded away from people's memories.

Hyrkan was able to have an uncanny appreciation of this User.

At the same time, a thought crossed Hyrkan's mind.

'If I had met someone like Whistling instead of the Hahoe Mask guild before I returned to the past.....'

Maybe Hyrkan would have been like Whistling. Instead of using the game as a tool to gain resources and achieve a goal, he might have lived life as he enjoyed the game itself. What kind of life would he have lead? Hyrkan couldn't even imagine such a scenario.

'Stop fucking with yourself, Ahn-jaehyun.'

He couldn't imagine it, but he had been trying to imagine it. He made a sarcastic remark disparaging himself.

These thoughts were unbecoming of Hyrkan.

'The timing is almost right.'



Hyrkan wasn't suited for some quiet fantasy game. He was intense, which lead to his flashy style.

The flashiness allowed him to make money. He could become the best only if he could make money.

This was what the game meant to Hyrkan. There was no room for romanticism in this game for him. It was a matter of life and death. This was the only two choice.

The same was true of today. He wasn't here to simply succeed in the raid. He had come here prepared to sell the Raid footage.

“Get down, Whistling. I'll end this.”

It was time for him to unveil 'that'.

11.

Kwahng!

The first explosive detonated.

Kwahng, kwahng!

Black Sap continuously dripped down from all over the body.



The sound of explosives going off was heard, and flames erupted. When the flames erupted, the Black Tree looked like a decorated Christmas tree.

The string of explosions were so numerous that it couldn't be contained. It started to spread. It was like looking at night sky in a rural area where the stars dotted the sky.

‘The explosives are going off quite well.’

As he watched the sight, Hyrkan was struck with a feeling of admiration inside, but he had a sad expression on his face.

Bone Explosives.

It was the main cause of the explosions going off right now. Hyrkan had prepared several hundred Bone Explosives to kill the Black Tree.

The total cost of this was unknown. Hyrkan had bought ingredients for the Bone Explosives whenever he saw cheap Bone Ingredient Coins come up on the market. He made the Bone Ingredients into Bone Explosives, then he had put it into the Item Storage. He had brought out most of the Bone Explosives he had save this time around. It was possible for him to calculate the total cost, but he intentionally didn't calculate it. His insides would burst if he did.

One thing was for certain. Several thousand gold was going off



right now.

‘The picture will look fantastic.’

He didn’t really need to catch the Black Tree like this. The large group of bombs were set off for show, and it was a waste of resource. This was evidence that Hyrkan was playing this game for materialistic reasons.

Whistling’s expression became a bit heavier when he witnessed the sight. Whistling quickly realized the reason for the spectacle in front of his eyes.

‘He’s desperate.’

As someone who was born into a wealthy family, he could play this game for pleasure. Unlike him, Hyrkan had to think about the spectacle, and the way he could sell this footage. Hyrkan wasn’t playing this game for himself. He was playing for others, and Whistling felt sympathy towards Hyrkan.

Of course, Whistling didn’t pity Hyrkan. He didn’t have a reason or the qualification to be able to pity him.

“Thank you.”

He just expressed his thanks.



Whistling had set up the table, yet he wouldn't have been able to eat the meal if not for Hyrkan.

“If you need any help, please don't hesitate to call on me. If it is a request from you, I'll help you once with no questions asked.”

Hyrkan expressed his thanks. At the same time, Hyrkan put himself under Whistling's debt. He had done something that left him grasping the short end of the stick. Maybe it was a way for him to leave a point of contact with Whistling.

At that moment, both Users....

[You've gained the Title ' Black Tree Logger'.]

The Announcement that signaled the end of the hunt rang out.



# Chapter 114 – The Foe That Gives Generously (1)

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1.

“Do you want to go with me to the Tehkee tribe?”

Hyrkan had stripped the Barks off the Black Tree, and he severed the tree branches. Hyrkan was taking apart the Black Tree to gain the Ingredient Coins.

As he was doing this, Whistling just dropped an offer to Hyrkan.

Whistling’s suggestion was unexpected. It was unexpected for him and Hyrkan.

Moreover, it was a big deal to be able to go to an Eleven tribe’s village. Under normal circumstances, one had to have the qualification to be able to go there. One needed a Quest or a Title. However, Hyrkan would be able to visit the Tehkee tribe through Whistling. It was an incredible opportunity.

“It’s all right.”

However, Hyrkan turned down the offer.

Whistling didn’t ask the reason behind the refusal.



“I guess it is time for us to part.”

“As promised, we won’t balance the account for the Coins. If you have something you have to do soon, you can go. Don’t worry about me.”

“When I receive the Circlet of Purification from Chieftain Drah, I’ll send it to you.”

“Since you are already sending it my way, it would be ok if you send another Item with it by mistake.”

They ended the conversation on a very light note. A smile was seen on both their lips, and that was how the conversation had ended.

The two didn’t make any promises to meet again as they parted from each other.

2.

‘Wow.’

Hyrkan looked at the Ingredient Coins that was filling the bag used for storing his Ingredient Coins. It looked as if it was about to burst. He put on a big grin. His Ingredient Gem bag was also getting close to bursting.



‘Everything’s better when all the benefit goes to one person.’

After organizing his Ingredient Coins, he scouted out a location where he could immediately log out. He had one more hour of play time left, but Hyrkan decided to logout a bit early.

‘I’ll log out first, then I have to sent the original footage and money to the Romani Films.’

He had a lot of things to do.

When one finishes a great task, a lot of loose ends had to be tied up.

The first thing he had to do was to commission the Romani Films to produce his video. He had decided to go all out for the purpose of creating a footage he could sell. Of course, he would leave the production of the footage to the Romani Films.

He had also done a calculation. It was impossible to do an in depth calculation, but at the very least, he could get a rough estimate on how much surplus fund he will gain from this.

He also had to make changes to something that was the very important to him. He had to change some aspects of his long term plan.



Hyrkan had gained a lot from this Black Tree hunt.

He also had to worry about what he should do with the Circlet of Purification.

‘Should I sell the Circlet of Purification or not? That is the real question.’

When the Circlet of Purification was put on the market, it wouldn't just be single Users trying to purchase the Item. The Item was valuable enough for the 30 greats guilds to get involved in the bid.

What was it worth?

‘How much can I get..... It'll be hard to trade it for gold.’

There was no way he could trade it for gold. The amount was too large to trade. In a situation like this, one usually traded an Item for an Item. If it was the Circlet of Purification, he would easily be able to get a level 150 Unique Set.

‘Should I aim for the Greenstone Imoogi set?’

It wouldn't be hard to pry away the coveted Greenstone Imoogi set. However, if Hyrkan asked for a trade with the guild, V&V might think Hyrkan was trying to cheat them. That might be a reason why the request might be ignored.



‘It wouldn’t be too bad for me to use it. I could sell this anytime I want’

It wasn’t a bad idea for Hyrkan to use the Item for himself.

He would be immune from every negative effect. The beast called Hyrkan might become a much more scarier beast.

First, there would be no better Item to have when fighting a Boss Monsters. The Boss Monsters were tough to face in the first place, because Fear and other debuff skills reduced the User’s Stats.

This Item would also be quite useful when fighting other Users. This was especially true for him, since Hyrkan was able to use powerful Curse skills. However, what if Curses and debuff skills didn’t work on him? Hyrkan’s opponents would automatically swear if their skills wouldn’t take hold.

The cherry on top was the fact that he could sell it after using it. He could get a reasonable price for it no matter when he sold it.

Of course, one’s watch could be stolen after a PK, and there was a chance that he could lose it. Hyrkan would lose his everloving mind.

For the time being it was important for him to gain the Black Tree set. He wasn’t sure about this, but he currently had enough Gem ingredients to make 30 parts to the Rare Item set. The 30



parts meant he could make 6 sets.

The Black Tree set was good enough for him to use, and it could also be sold. If he sold it after using it for a while, he wouldn't lose too much money. Of course, the Ingredient Coins and Gems could be sold at a higher price compared to pre-made Items. However, the difference wasn't that big.

Anyways, Hyrkan's personal strength had increased by a significant margin. This meant he had to significantly alter his plans.

However, one thing was for sure. This was bad news for the groups, who would have to fight against Hyrkan. What happened this day was an unfavorable development for them.

3.

Whistling discreetly touched his forehead. Whistling had a very bizarre expression on his face. He felt happy, yet even his happy face looked rugged and ill-tempered. It was terrifying. As an outside observer, he had a face that was hard to read... It was a form of a poker face.

‘This isn't bad.’

Whistling had this expression on his face, because he had just finished the Quest related to the Tehkee tribe.



The tribe had been saved from the Black Tree's Curse, so everyone had expressed their thanks to him.

First, he got three substantial Titles. One of the Titles gave a percentage increase to his Stats.

On top of that, he had gained two Items that were considered to be the treasures of the Tehkee tribe. He earned a level 150 Unique Rank sword, and gloves. The Options on these Items were very good. Amongst the Level 150 Unique Items, these were in the top bracket.

Also, these were Bound Items, so it was impossible to trade them. However, Whistling didn't care about that.

Something else had put Whistling in a good mood. A young elven girl had given a flower she picked from a tree she had grown to Whistling. She also planted an adorable kiss on his forehead.

'This isn't bad at all.'

He replayed that moment again. He had a happy expression from the memory, and Whistling walked towards the Puree Village.

He didn't have a significant reason behind his visit to the Puree village. It was a place where one could hear information regarding the Pure forest. One was also able to check the market rates, and the consumable items he needed could be purchased there. The consumable items that could be traded for at the Puree Forest was



more expensive than the market value, but it didn't matter to Whistling. He had a lot of money.

Moreover, he had visited the Puree Village several times, and he never run across trouble before.

However, it was different this time around.

When he crossed the gate into the Puree Village, the Big Smiles guild member looked at him with a different expression on his face than usual. His changed expression and his continuously moving lips meant that he was having an emergency call with some unknown person. At the very least, it was very unlikely that this User was mumbling to himself.

‘Something is going on.’

Whistling recognized the change in the atmosphere. He guessed something out of the ordinary was about to happen.

As if to answer his prediction, ten Users appeared. They didn't just appear. They were situated in positions that made it look like they were surrounding him.

“Whistling Pitbull.”

There were 10 of them. The 10 Users were wearing mismatched armors, so one couldn't see a unified theme between them. However, the Big Smiles emblem on their chests identified them



clearly.

The Users from the Big Smiles guild surrounded Whistling.

Whistling didn't check the faces of the Users surrounding him. A fighting dog didn't care about his surrounding.

His attention was focused on one person.

‘Who is that?’

He only glared at his prey and victim.

Whistling glared at the person, who had called out his nickname. This User looked completely different from Whistling.

He had a corpulent body that made one feel sorry for the armors he was wearing. Whistling was reticent to think this, but the User in front of him was uglier than him. However, this fat User had a presence about him that one wouldn't be able to forget after seeing him once.

“What does Big Smiles guild want with me?”

Whistling took up the banter.

“Want? That's what I want to ask you. How dare a guild member



of the Fighters guild operate out of our territory so boldly? I want to ask you the same question. What business brings you here?”

The thoughts within Whistling’s head became complicated. He had been visiting this place without any trouble until now, so why were they suddenly behaving like this?

Instead of worrying over it, he immediately replied with a question.

“What is your name?”

He was a regular guild member, but Whistling was still a member of a big guild called the Fighters guild.

The User trying to pick a fight with him was a member of the Big Smiles guild. Moreover, there was a high probability that he was an officer.

Of course, if the two of them fought, this wouldn’t be a personal matter any more. It would be an incident between two guilds. One had to check each other’s rank to avoid unnecessary trouble. It would be best to prevent accidents from happening. Of course, if one was purposefully causing an incident, it was a whole different story.

“Apollo.”

As if his opponent understood this, he revealed his name.



“I am an officer of the Big Smiles guild.”

He revealed his rank.

At that point, Whistling became a bit suspicious.

‘Apollo? There was someone like him amongst the officers in Big Smile?’

He had been disinterested in guild politics, so of course, Whistling hadn’t memorized the names of all the officers in the 30 great guilds.

Still, he had never even heard a single rumor about an officer with such a corpulent body. Moreover, Apollo’s appearance was memorable. If he had a brief encounter with Apollo, he would have remembered it.

‘No one would dare to impersonate an officer of the Big Smiles guild here. That’s the truth.’

He determined it wasn’t possible for someone to impersonate oneself as an officer of the Big Smiles guild inside the Puree village. This village was under their jurisdiction, and this User was wearing the Big Smiles guild emblem.

Then....



“I’m moving by myself through the Puree Forest. Why would that be a problem? I’m not even in a party.”

“It wouldn’t have been a problem if you had asked for permission.”

“Permission?”

“You should have asked with sincerity. I would have believed in your sincerity if you had come bowing your head.”

His opponent was openly provoking Whistling. That was obvious.

‘Hoohng.’

At that point, Whistling didn’t have any complicated thoughts. In the first place, he wasn’t the type to use his head in such a situation.

“Come at me.”

Choo-roong!

Whistling immediately unsheathed the sword hanging from his waist.



4.

After a break, Hyrkan connected to the game. When Hyrkan gained access to the game, he quickly moved with his full bags containing the Ingredient Coins. His foot speed was much lighter than it had ever been.

‘Did he already send it?’

Hyrkan was running, and the thought of the Circlet of Purification made his feet feel much lighter.

‘Ah. I hope the Circlet of Purification is there when I arrive at the Item Storage facility.’

The Circlet of Purification was working better than a Haste skill in increasing Hyrkan’s speed.

However, Hyrkan came to a stop when he realized a group was quickly coming towards him.

‘Huh?’

Hyrkan stopped as a matter of course, and he hid himself.

‘What’s this?’



He had stopped as a matter of course, but in truth, this wasn't a normal procedure for regular Users. Normally, when one comes across other Users, one either ignored or greeted them. Only the shady Users hid themselves.

However, Hyrkan was unique. He had already gone through unspeakable hardships and suffering. The entire world of Warlord had been his enemy once. He had a habit of hiding himself when a large group approached his direction. It was a very sad habit.

After Hyrkan hid himself, three Users quickly rushed by Hyrkan's location. They were checking every direction, but they didn't catch sight of Hyrkan. The three Users shared a brief conversation.

“Shit. Where did that guy run to?”

“We can't catch him. How are we suppose to catch a single User in such a vast land? When we lost him at the village that was the end.”

After the brief conversation, they immediately moved into the distance. However, Hyrkan kept himself hidden even after they disappeared. He closed his eyes, and he thought about what he had just witnessed.

‘There were three of them with the Big Smiles guild emblem....’



The three Users that just passed by were affiliated with the Big Smiles guild.

‘If I consider their running speed and Item Setting, they are Striker Type Users.’

On top of that, they were Swordsman Class Users, who had increased their Strength Stat. They all seemed to be chasing after someone.

Something was afoot.

‘Who are they chasing after that they felt the need to form a pursuit party?’

A normal hunting party never consisted of three Strikers unless they were running away. Even then it was more common to see Strikers disperse when running away.

In the end, it meant the three members of the Big Smiles guild was a part of a pursuit party. A pursuit party had been formed to hunt down a normal User. It meant they were hellbent at hunting down this User.

At that moment, Hyrkan thought for a brief moment.

‘Hmmm.’



He didn't have any good feelings towards the Big Smiles guild. Moreover, he didn't know what their intentions were.

However, Hyrkan didn't feel the need to dip his toe into something annoying. He had been planning on bypassing the Puree village in the off chance that a problem might occur.

In truth, he didn't even need to think about it. It didn't matter, who the Big Smiles guild was chasing down. It had nothing to do with Hyrkan.

He would ignore it. That was the wisest course.

It happened when he was about to choose the wise course of action.

“He's over there. There!”

The three Users had doubled back towards Hyrkan's location.

‘Are they perhaps aiming for me?’

Hyrkan discreetly put his hand into his pocket to grasp the Skeleton Fragments.

However, they just rushed past Hyrkan. Hyrkan extracted the hand that had been touching his Skeleton Fragments.



As the group was getting farther away, one User let out a shout.

“Let’s hunt down that fighting dog!”

Hyrkan had a reason to move now.



# Chapter 115 – The Foe That Gives Generously (2)

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5.

“Are you stupid? How can you lose him?”

“I have nothing to say regarding that part.”

The two Users sped along the Puree Forest. This wasn't an unusual sight. In Warlord, there were numerous Users that were able to run faster than a cheetah. It was something anyone could do if one invested in the Strength Stat.

However, there was one person here where the swift movement was incongruous with his physique. A User with an egregiously obese body was moving at lightning speed... It was analogous to seeing a pig that should be too fat to move running faster than a cheetah. It was something one didn't see everyday.

“This is my first mission! If you guys ruin this for me, all of you will suffer the consequences!”

When Apollo had become an officer of the Big Smiles guild, the guild had attached skilled Users to him. It was to help Apollo out. Apollo was berating one of these skilled Users named Chiroro.

Of course, this was possible since this was a game. It was almost



impossible to shout at someone when one was running at full speed. If this wasn't a game, Apollo wouldn't be able to run this fast. He would probably pant and sweat profusely just from act of walking out of his house. He probably wouldn't even be able to speak.

This was why Chiroro was nodding his head outwardly, and he was ridiculing Apollo on the inside.

‘This pig is too greedy. He'll make me suffer the consequence? How laughable. If you had just been a little bit more competent at blocking the Pitbull, we wouldn't be in this situation.’

Whistling Pitbull.

They had messed with a member of the Fighters guild. However, this wasn't a decision made solely by Apollo. It was a decision made by the Big Smiles Guild.

So why were they messing with Pitbull? The underlying cause in most fights were similar. It was an action taken to settle a wrong.

The Big Smiles guild had taken heavy damage with the war against the Triple Wings, but their situation had stabilized now. Even though they found stability within, the situation around them were a different story. Before they knew it, the Big Smiles guild had come out at the bottom of the 30 great guilds ranking.

When they fell to the floor, there was a host of guilds beneath



their feet. The Underfoot guilds now looked at the Big Smiles guild in a different light. They weren't viewed as a wall they had to climb over. The Big Smiles guild was now perceived to be a prey they had to eat.

They needed to punish someone as a warning to others. They had to show others that this was a dog eat dog world out there, and they were the dog that ate the other dog.

They were very confident that they could accomplish this. The Big Smiles guild was on the lowest seat, but the resources of a 30 great guild was vastly different from the Underfoot guilds.

The problem had been clearly defined.

They had come up with several plans to solve this problem, and one of them was to capture the Whistling Pitbull.

Whistling was a member of the Fighters guild, and his level was very high. He was also very skilled, but on the face of it, he was a regular guild member. Even if some problem arises, the backlash would be mild.

Moreover, he usually played by himself. His personality was aggressive, so he didn't back down from fights that came this way. This was true even if it was a fight against numerous opponents. He would never back down.

If one put a positive spin to it, he had a very fiery and cool



personality. On the other hand, these characteristics made him easy to catch.

In truth, Whistling had easily fallen for their provocation. When they had surrounded him, he didn't avoid the fight. Whistling actually went on the offensive.

However, the problem started from there. The target of Whistling's sudden attack was Apollo, and Apollo was defeated before he could do anything.

‘Well, maybe it was because Pitbull is amazing.’

Chiroro clicked his tongue when he thought about what had happened.

It had been a terrifying sight.

Whistling used the Charge skill to close the distance with Apollo in an instant, and he used Body Slam on his opponent.

Apollo's corpulent flew away like a balloon, and Whistling followed after him. Before Apollo could hit the ground, Whistling's skill-infused sword strikes struck Apollo's body.

Kah-ahng, kahn-ahng!

The consecutive sword strikes dented Apollo's armor. In the end,



Whistling was able to sever Apollo's left arm and right knee.

The sudden attack and the Body Slam had made the contest into a one on one battle. He used that brief moment after connecting his skill and sword strikes to use the Body Maiming method.

‘Also, I never expected him to run away at that point.’

After showing his almost godlike techniques, Whistling ran away the moment he saw an opportunity. This was the most unexpected part of all of this.

Whistling.

Whistling's personality didn't allow him run away. He usually just accepted his death as he fought on in a hopeless situation. He was called Pitbull not just because of his appearance.

Anyways, if Apollo had been able to hold out, they wouldn't have lost Whistling.

‘I can't believe he was sent flying from a single blow.’

Chiroro couldn't hold back his mocking laugh when he once again thought about what had happened to Apollo.

‘The Items are wasted on that bastard.’



Apollo's Items were the best one could get at level 140. He had a Unique set. It was an Item setting that even Chiroro wouldn't be able to acquire. He was wearing such Items yet he was defeated with a single blow.

‘Money is everything. Yes, money is everything.’

The halo of his father was over Apollo. He had bought off the other officers, and he had been lucky in being able to hold a weakness over a particular officer. Apollo would have never become an officer of the Big Smiles guild if he didn't have all these factors going for him.

Moreover, the officers of the Big Smiles guild and the guild members that had similar rank as him welcomed Apollo's appearance. They wanted to receive the crumbs that would fall off Apollo's table.

This was true for Chiroro too.

‘Well, I'll wipe his butt, and I'll receive ample amount of money for my troubles.’

This was why Chiroro was sticking so close to Apollo's side. He wanted to get the crumbs by being the closest to Apollo.

Apollo was letting out steam as he kept expressing his anger. Chiroro was ridiculing him inside as he tried to hold back his sneer. At that moment, a message from the Voice Talk program



arrived .

– We found Pitbull!

6.

‘Shit.’

Whistling gritted his teeth as he saw the five Users surround him. Whistling’s vision was very blurry when he looked at the 5 Users. His vision was akin to one’s vision when walking in a downpour without an umbrella. It was as if the wind was blowing against one’s eyes.

Moreover, his arms and legs felt as if it was being weighed down by very heavy sandbags. He was moving very slow compared to his usual self.

It was the result of the Debuff magic. He had been hit with Haze and Slow.

‘I was unlucky.’

Whistling had been quite successful in his escape. In truth, the Puree forest was so large that it was more advantageous for the fugitive than the pursuit group.

Moreover, Whistling had travelled inside the Puree forest as if it



was his home prior to this, so there was zero chance that he would get lost here. If he wanted to, he could hide inside the Tehkee tribe's village where only allowed Users could enter.

Unfortunately, he had come across the Big Smiles' guild member conducting a regular hunt instead of the the pursuit group.

In truth, Whistling didn't realize they were members of the Big Smiles guild. He had been about to pass them by.

His luck worsened when the members of the Big Smiles guild party was infused with several skilled Users.

“Don't attack him! Contain! Just contain him!”

“We just need to buy some time. Just stop him from moving.”

“Don't hoard your consumable Items. Put three candies into your mouth!”

“The effect of the Skill won't last long now. I've started Casting, so you guys have to buy me some time before I can use my magic.”

“Shit. If I reroll a character, I'll never choose Tanker again.”

These Users were well aware of the situation, and they had arrived at the most optimal course of action. Whistling felt that it wouldn't be easy for him to get out of this situation.



The critical blow had been the Debuff magic. In a PK, being stabbed was preferable to being hit by Debuff magic spells.

‘I should have used the Circlet of Purification.’

If he boiled everything down into simple terms, this was all happening because of Hyrkan.

Whistling had put away the Circlet of Purification inside the pouch. He considered the Item as being owned by the Hahoe Mask.

He was also running away, because of the Hahoe Mask. He wasn't afraid of dying, but he had to send the Circlet of Purification to the Hahoe Mask. He would feel troubled if that was delayed.

He had connected to the game early, and he had moved as he was being chased by time. This was all being done, so he could quickly give the Circlet of Purification to the Hahoe Mask.

Of course, Whistling didn't blame the Hahoe Mask.

‘I have to survive somehow.’

He tried to conceive a plan where he'll come out alive. However, five additional Users appeared, and Whistling couldn't help but feel hopeless at his prospects.



7.

Chiroro and Apollo arrived. Whistling was in a bad spot.

There wouldn't be any close contest here.

Whistling was by himself, and he had 10 opponents. Moreover, there were two magicians included in the group of 10 Users.

The difference in fighting power was so big that it wouldn't be a close fight. The ten Users had a numerical advantage, and they were aggressively using the support of the Magicians. The Strikers surrounded Whistling, and the Magicians threw their magic.

“Good job!”

Whistling was becoming a mess as the one-sided magical bombardment was sent towards him. The happiest person from seeing Whistling like this was Apollo.

Moreover, Apollo had ordered for this ugly spectacle to happen. As he was coming here, Apollo made sure no one would kill Pitbull until he got there.

On the other hand, Chiroro's face hardened when he saw what was transpiring.

‘Shit. It would be best if he would just end this.’



This business wasn't about punishing or taking revenge on Whistling. This was supposed to be an opening act to a war. The opening act had to be clean.

However, the current situation was lame. No matter who saw it their actions was lame and cheap. There was no way this incident would help Big Smiles in any way.

Chiroro took a peek at Apollo.

'He was in charge of running a guild with his namesake, yet why is he so dumb?'

Chiroro couldn't alter the order already given by Apollo. The two of them weren't on equal standings. At this moment, they were in a relationship akin to a subordinate and a superior.

Moreover, Chiroro was well aware of Apollo's personality. He was crude and selfish.... He was shamefully dirty. If a loyal subject spoke out in a negative manner, Apollo was the type to eliminate that subordinate as a first order of business.

Apollo had no idea what Chiroro was thinking, so he had a triumphant expression on his face.

"How dare you mess with me."



He wanted to show his expression to Whistling, so he had taken off his helmet. He spoke in such a manner, yet he stayed far away from Whistling. Whistling was surrounded by a ring of Users, and Apollo was about 4 to 5 meters away from the encirclement.

This was why his words hadn't been heard by Whistling. Whistling didn't even glance at Apollo. He didn't even realize Apollo had appeared.

If seen from a different perspective, it looked as if Whistling was ignoring Apollo.

Apollo's expression hardened as he yelled again.

“How dare you mess with me!”

Apollo yelled out in anger, and the Big Smiles guild members had an expression of derision for a brief moment when Apollo had to repeat his words.

The angry shout reached Whistling this time. Whistling turned to at Apollo. Whistling was able to quickly find the source of the voice, since Apollo had a corpulent body.

At that moment, Whistling's expression hardened, and he narrowed his eyes. Whistling's expression was deadly. Both the Users close to him and afar became alarmed at his expression.

Apollo unconsciously avoided looking into Whistling's eyes.



‘Huh?’

Something flew towards Apollo’s eyes.

Poohk!

At the same time, Apollo’s world had turned pitch black.

“Uh?”

A nonsensical sound escaped Apollo’s mouth.

“Ooh-uh-uh!”

At the same time, Apollo’s corpulent body was being dragged away by someone.

“What? What the hell!”

Apollo couldn’t comprehend what had just happened. Chiroro was the first one to notice what had happened.

‘What’s going on?’

Apollo, who had been next to him, let out a weird sound. When



Chiroro turned his head, Apollo had already been dragged away.

Moreover, the User dragging away Apollo was none other than the...

“Hahoe Mask?”

It was the User with the most recognizable symbol in Warlord. It was the Hahoe Mask.

‘W...what the hell is going on?’

Chiroro was still unable to comprehend what was going on.

Why did the Hahoe Mask suddenly show up here? The Hahoe Mask had stabbed Apollo’s eyes, and he had dragged away Apollo. Then he started to tirelessly hack and stab Apollo’s face and neck. Why was he doing this?

“H...help me.....”

Chiroro’s introspection ended when Apollo suffered a Game Over from the Hahoe Mask’s continuous attack. No, it was more apt to say a chill had run up his spine, and Chiroro had come to his senses.

“Hahoe Mask!”



Chiroro let out a shout. In a flash, the Hahoe Mask had killed Apollo. Hyrkan took off Apollo's glove, and he was getting ready to sever Apollo's wrist to get at his watch.

He was clearly ignoring Chiroro.

At that moment, Chiroro's sound assaulted his ears.

– Isn't that the Hahoe Mask? Why did the Hahoe Mask show up here?

– What should we do? Should we catch the Hahoe Mask too?

– What should we do with Pitbull?

– Was Apollo-nim killed?

The Voice Talk program vomited out a host of voices, and it cluttered Chiroro's mind.

Chiroro yelled out in annoyance.

“Shut the hell up!”

His words had come out overly harsh. This was a direct reflection of Chiroro's unsettled mind. On top of that, his shout had been heard by Hyrkan. Only after taking the watch, Hyrkan looked at



Chiroro.

“Hoo-ooh!”

A lot of emotions were mixed in with that sigh. Chiroro organized his thoughts before he spoke.

“Are you really the Hahoe Mask?”

“Can’t you tell by seeing this?”

Tap tap.

Hyrkan rapped against the Hahoe Mask with his finger.

“What did you attack us? Are you perhap in league with the Fighters guild?”

“Fighters?”

The Hahoe Mask tilted his head in confusion. His gesture indicated that he had no idea what Chiroro was talking about. It was quite believable.

However, no matter how one looked at it this looked like the Hahoe Mask jumping in to save the Pitbull.



However, the Hahoe Mask's response complicated the thoughts inside Chiroro's head.

There was only one way to defuse this situation.

“Did you attack the Big Smiles guild to rescue the Whistling Pitbull?”

Chiroro had to do it through dialogue.

“Whistling Pitbull? Do you mean that guy over there?”

At Chiroro's words, Hyrkan pointed at Pitbull, who was surrounded by Users. At the same time, Hyrkan yelled out his words.

“Hey, the dog-looking dude over there. Do you know me?”

Whistling sniffed instead of answering him. It basically mean Whistling didn't know Hyrkan.

“Then why are you attacking us?”

“I didn't attack you. I just carried out a personal revenge against the Apollo guild.”

Chiroro's head was about to explode at those words. This hadn't



been some normal accident.

“Apollo is now an officer of the Big Smiles guild! Shall I consider this as a hostile act against the Big Smiles?”

In the end, Chiroro made a reckless gambit for the win.

Instead of replying, Hyrkan pointed to his surrounding with his chin. Chiroro looked out of the corner of his eyes to see where Hyrkan’s chin was pointing towards to.

‘Tsk.’

There were a host of Skeleton Warriors waiting in Defense mode. When Hyrkan flicked his finger, they would unhesitatingly run towards Chiroro and the Big Smiles guild members.

Chiroro swallowed his saliva.

‘That’s the Hahoe Mask’s famous Skeletons.’

The Hahoe Mask’s battle capability was as advertised. Of course, Chiroro side had enough number on their side, so there was a chance that they could win.

However, the damage they would take was unavoidable. Moreover, the Hahoe Mask was great at escaping. If he wanted to, he could use the Skeletons as bait, then he could run away.



That would make this situation more troublesome.

As if he could see through Chiroro's thoughts, Hyrkan spoke.

“I'll consider your words as a threat towards me. I'll consider those words as a declaration of war towards me by the Big Smiles guild. From this point in time, I'll fight against the Big Smiles guild.”

Chiroro unconsciously swallowed his saliva at the declaration.

‘Ah.’

His rash gambit had caused a self-mate.

‘I can't let this happen!’

The worth of the Hahoe Mask was at an all time high right now. If he showed interest in joining a guild, any 30 great guilds would treat him like an officer.

If the Big Smiles guild made an enemy out of him, the Hahoe Mask could join any guild if he was at a disadvantage. This meant they would have an adversarial relationship with the guild he joined. Those in the 30 great guilds wouldn't relish fighting against Big Smiles, but they would do it if it allowed them a chance at gaining Hyrkan.



In the end, there would be a full-scale war. If such a situation came to be, there was high probability that the Big Smiles guild will apologize to the Hahoe Mask. The Big Smiles guild had already gotten in big trouble from fighting with the Triple Wings, so another war with a 30 great guild was a suicidal move.

Moreover, if this situation came to pass, someone would have to take the blame. He couldn't predict the future, but it was clear as to who will be charged for precipitating this situation.

“W...wait a moment!”

Chiroro was the most likely person to be blamed in the future, so he desperately yelled out.

“I’m sorry. I apologize. I made a mistake. I had no intention of threatening you. I’m sorry if your feelings was hurt.”

He looked like he was begging. He had displayed such a bold front a moment ago. It almost made one feel sorry for Chiroro.

Hahoe Mask spoke earnestly as he looked at Chiroro.

“In our country, if a Warlord User wrongs another, the User in the wrong has to cut off his own wrist as an apology. Then the User has to give his wrist watch to the wronged party. It is called the Watchman style. If you want to apologize, you have to show that level of sincerity.”



Chiroro had been listening in earnest to the story, and his expression crumpled.

‘Watchman? What the hell is that?’

Of course, Chiroro didn’t know about the Watchman style.

However, it wasn’t too hard to decipher Hyrkan’s explanation. The problem was the fact that he couldn’t give away his watch. Most of the Big Smiles guild members gathered here didn’t own most of their Items. These were Items loaned out by the guild.

Yet they would have to give away their watches? On top of that, they had to cut off their own wrists to give their watches? This wasn’t a case where their watches would be stolen through PK.

“.....is there no other way?”

“You are the one apologizing yet you are being picky on how to do it?”

“I’m unwilling to part with the Items. I’ll compensate you in some other way.”

When he heard Chiroro’s words, Hyrkan turned his head slightly to the side, and he snorted. Chiroro kept his mouth shut, and everyone gathered at the location unconsciously listened and



looked closely at Hyrkan.

Everyone was waiting for Hyrkan to open his mouth. As if he wanted to make them sweat, Hyrkan let more time pass. When silence blanketed the surrounding, Hyrkan very slowly opened his mouth.

“One level..... One gold.”

It happened when everyone was was focused on the conversation between Hyrkan and Chiroro.

“Ooh-ahk!”

Whistling moved.

After his abnormal status magic effect disappeared, Whistling used Body Slam on one of the Strikers surrounding him. The Striker flew away, and he quickly ran away through the hole that had been formed.

“What the hell?”

“He bounced?”

Everyone had been focused on Hyrkan that they weren't able to properly deal with the situation. The more quick thinking individuals amongst the group started to chase after Whistling.



However, they weren't able to move in the end.

“If you try to deceive me about your levels, your wrist will be severed!”

Hyrkan's shout was like a shackle on everyone's ankles.



# Chapter 116 – The Foe That Gives Generously (3)

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“How much is it in total?”

“It is around 2 thousand gold.....”

“Don’t give me such a vague figure. Give me the exact figure.”

“It is 2,355 gold.”

“It is about 100 golds more than what I expected. Are you sure you calculated it right?”

“You insisted on us paying for Apollo-nim too...”

Chiroro was using all his strength to hold back the swear words from coming out of his mouth as he listened to the conversation. As a result, his face was trembling. The Big Smiles guild members were turning their gazes or eyes away as they tried to avoid meeting Chiroro’s eyes.

‘Shit.’

If he berated his guild members, it wouldn’t solve anything. Chiroro continued to rage inside.



‘I’m ruined.’

He didn’t know what the Watchman style was, but in the end, Chiroro had to compensate Hyrkan. Everyone had to empty the golds they possessed, and in the end, 2,355 gold was snatched away from them. It was way cheaper than losing their wristwatches, but still it was a pretty large sum of money.

In truth, they never carried around that much gold. Unfortunately, one of the guild members doing a party hunt had two gold coins worth 1,000 gold each. He had withdrawn the gold to trade for an Item later.

‘We gave him the gold, yet he is being nasty...’

There was difference between asking them to send the money later, and shaking down as much money from them on the spot. In the end, the amount of money lost was the same, but the latter method seemed much dirtier. It was on a different level.

‘Maybe we should have just fought him?’

Chiroro felt regret as if he hadn’t made the right decision. The situation had come upon him too suddenly.

Of course, the regret didn’t last too long.

“What should we do? Should we track Pitbull again...”



“Never mind. We won’t be able to catch up to him even if we start pursuing him now.”

The fact that they had lost Pitbull made him much more vexed. When the Pitbull ran away, all their efforts up until now had been all for naught. They had gone through all the hardship, yet they had lost all their money.

‘It might have been better if we had let Whistling kill Apollo.’

If Apollo had suffered a Game Over by Whistling, their guild would have been justified in their retaliation. Instead, Apollo had been killed by the Hahoe Mask. They couldn’t justify starting a war with the Fighters guild any more.

Of course, the Fighters guild could try to avenge Pitbull, but the Fighters guild wasn’t dumb. Their overall fighting power was weaker than the Big Smiles. Anyways, they hadn’t been able to kill the Pitbull, so there was no reason why the Fighters guild would start a fight with them.

The status of the Game Over was important. If the Pitbull had suffered a Game Over, the Fighters guild would have no choice. They would have to retaliate. If they didn’t, the faith of the normal Users in the guild would have been shaken. If a guild did nothing when a guild member was killed, why would the guild members put their trust and loyalty into the guild?

Moreover, Whistling held a unique position within the Fighters



guild. He was a normal guild member, but he was worth more than an officer. If they didn't get revenge for a User of that stature, normal guild members would have to stay silent even if they got killed by the members of the 30 great guilds.

This business had been an utter disaster in many ways.

Moreover, Chiroro's mood worsened significantly when a phone call arrived not too long afterwards.

– What the hell happened? What's going on?

When he heard Apollo's voice, Chiroro took deep breaths for a brief moment. If he didn't, he probably would have said some harsh words. After he took several breaths, Chiroro explained the situation. After finishing his explanation, Chiroro immediately asked Apollo a question.

“What is your relationship with the Hahoe Mask?”

When the Hahoe Mask took down Apollo, he said it was a personal grudge. Chiroro had to confirm this fact first. If the Hahoe Mask lied, maybe he could use this situation to his advantage.

– Shit. That isn't important right now. I was taken down by that bastard! The Hahoe Mask smeared the reputation of the Big Smiles guild!



When Chiroro heard Apollo's rage-filled voice, he intuited what had occurred.

‘It really had been about a personal grudge.’

Even if one put aside the personal grudge, one just had to look at Apollo's personality. He probably acted in a corrupted manner.

If he had run his guild in such a way, it meant he had run afoul of the Hahoe Mask in some way.

This exacerbated the problem. If Apollo had told everyone the truth, they could talk to each other on the same page. However, Apollo was showing no signs of admitting his wrong doings. He was just trying to gloss over the facts.

This was why Chiroro was sure of one thing.

‘This guy will keep digging himself into trouble. He will never untangle himself from the problem he causes.’

This meant this business was going to get much much worse.

“Hey!”

Hyrkan waved towards a dense group of trees. Whistling appeared from behind a thick tree.



In short course, the distance between the two closed.

“I look like a dog?”

Instead of a greeting, Whistling repeated the words he heard not too long ago. Hyrkan shrugged his shoulders.

“Do you know anyone who think you are handsome? Do you want me to lie about it?”

“Why not?”

“Isn’t that too much of a bald face lie? The Big Smiles guild members would never believe my words.”

“That means you really think I look like a dog.”

“Uh.”

Hyrkan nodded his head.

“Are you perhaps expecting me to back down, and tell you that you look like Leonardo DiCaprio?”

At those words, Whistling relaxed his face, and he let out a light laugh. Of course, he still gave off a fierce energy, but Hyrkan was used to his face now. Hyrkan put on a smile too. Of course,



Whistling hadn't mentioned the incident, because he had been offended by Hyrkan's words.

"Thank you."

He had to set up a suitable atmosphere before he could speak those embarrassing words. That was all there was to it.

"You don't have to thank me. Anyways, you should have contacted me. If you had contacted me, you wouldn't have gotten into this mess."

"I wanted to contact you only when I have good news."

Hyrkan smirked.

"So why did the Big Smiles suddenly attack you? Are they planning on starting a war with the Fighters guild?"

Hyrkan immediately changed the topic.

This matter hadn't been something normal. Whistling had been able to operate in the Puree forest up until now. However, the Big Smiles guild had been hellbent at catching Whistling today. If Whistling had died, the Fighters guild and the Big Smiles guild would have been put on a collision course.

"They were basically trying to pick a fight with my guild."



Whistling had an understanding of the situation.

“Will it really be ok for you to help me like this?”

This was why Whistling was worried about Hyrkan. Whistling didn't know about Hyrkan's bad relationship with Apollo. Whistling was under the impression that Hyrkan had antagonized the Big Smiles in the course of helping him.

“Your relationship with the Big Smiles guild might suffer, because of me.”

Hyrkan snorted at those words.

“I already have a bad relationship with Big Smiles.”

“If you continue to act this way, the Big Smiles guild won't stay put...”

At that moment...

“You should join a guild, Hahoe Mask.”

Before Hyrkan could respond, Whistling immediately continued to put forward a suggestion. Hyrkan had a glum look on his face.



“You want me to join the Fighters guild?”

“No. I’m not talking about my guild. You should join one of the top guilds in Warlord. For example, you should join one like the Red Bulls or the Stormhunters.”

This sudden suggest made Hyrkan’s expression stiffen. Of course, Whistling didn’t know about Hyrkan’s personal sentiment towards a particular guild. The suggestion of Hyrkan joining the Stormhunters guild was like suggesting.....

‘This isn’t even funny.’

This conversation wasn’t funny at all.

“Why are you giving me such suggestions?”

“Hahoe Mask. Is it correct of me to presume that your goal is to become the best in Warlord?”

Hyrkan didn’t give an answer. He just swallowed his spit a little bit. Hyrkan didn’t plan on actively hiding his own intentions, but it felt as if Whistling had read his mind.

“If you want to be the best, then the answer is to join the best guild.”

Whistling’s words were an advice rather than a request.



Of course, he was overstepping his bounds.

“I know I’m not qualified to say this, and I know this is very rude....”

He was well aware of this fact, but he still decided to say it.

“You can become the best, Hahoe Mask. However, you are doing everything by yourself right now. You can’t even take a breather.”

He had no doubts that Hyrkan would someday represent Warlord as the strongest and best User. The Black Tree Raid had reaffirmed Whistling’s opinion of Hyrkan. He could guarantee it. There was no uncertainty to his eventual rise. The only thing that could derail it was a truck hitting Hyrkan. Hyrkan would become the best.

However, Hyrkan was doing everything by himself. It was clear that he was working himself into the ground. A person, who had the potential to become the greatest in this game, might become broken before he had the chance to become the best.

Whistling had suspected this truth from awhile back. Nevertheless, he was speaking out now, because Whistling was more worried about Hyrkan’s well-being than before.

Hyrkan gave a curt reply to Whistling’s advice.



“I’ll be looking forward to the Circlet of Purification.”

‘It is quieter than I thought it would be.’

Ahn-jaehyun busily swiped at his Tablet PC as he drank his coffee. In the end, he turned off his Tablet PC.

It had been four days since the Big Smiles guild had attacked Whistling.

Ahn-jaehyun thought a conflict was inevitable, but unexpectedly, there had been no conflict.

‘Did they agree on some basic agreement?’

There was a high chance that an under-the-table negotiation had gone on. Of course, Ahn-jaehyun wasn’t privy to the content of under-the-table deal.

‘So this basically means the Big Smiles still have a lot of power to spare?’

He could only guess at what was going on. It seemed the Big Smiles guild had amassed their resources to fight the Fighters guild. When power was gathered, it made one feel antsy to move.

‘That bastard Apollo became an officer of the Big Smiles guild, so there is no way they’ll leave me alone.’



There was a possibility that he might be Big Smiles' next target, so he kept that possibility in mind.

Ahn-jaehyun didn't welcome his current situation.

'If I fight with the Big Smiles guild right now, it'll be....'

However, the probability of the Big Smiles guild using their full resources to catch Ahn-jaehyun was almost non-existent. It was an act they could do only if the Big Smiles had fallen into the gutters. To put it in simple terms, if a guild used their entire resources to catch the Hahoe Mask, the world would condemn them.

However, they'll most definitely try to keep Ahn-jaehyun in check. They'll just do it out of the public's eyes.

The problem was Ahn-jaehyun wasn't going to allow them to keep him in check. Ahn-jaehyun didn't plan on backing down. He planned on meeting fire with fire. This will inevitably lead to a proper fight between him and the Big Smiles guild.

This was why the film he commissioned with the Romani film was important.

'If I have a lot of bullets, there's no reason why I wouldn't be able to fight them.'



Ahn-jaehyun was thinking about charging admission to watch his Black Tree Raid. There was a limit on how much he could earn by letting people view it for free. Of course, he would still be making an enormous profit even if he allowed people to view it for free.

However, even such high profits was a drop in the bucket on the stage he was about to enter.

‘If I charge admissions for my video, I’ll be on track. The war will start from that point on.’

If paid video sales was as successful as he expected it to be, Ahn-jaehyun planned to be more aggressive in the future. He’ll actively advance to the front. He’ll overtake the Underfoot guild, then he’ll chip away at the 30 great guilds from the bottom to the top. His ultimate goal was to topple the head members of the 30 great guilds.

There was a smile filled with happiness on Ahn-jaehyun’s lips when he thought about that day.

‘Wait for me. I’ll sever all of your wrists.’

Ahn-jaehyun’s musing continued. He imagined himself standing atop the crushed 30 great guilds. He would be equipped with the strongest Items, and he would be at the head of a powerful Undead army. It wasn’t too hard for him to imagine himself that way.

At that moment, the smile on his lips started to fade.



‘If I become the best.....’

It was easy to imagine himself becoming the best.

However...

‘What will I do afterwards?’

He couldn’t imagine past the moment when he became the best. Ahn-jaehyun, who had been immersed in his imagination, lost the smile that had been on his face.

Storm Queen, Matador, First Head.

These were the three Users that represented Warlord. They were so busy that it was almost impossible for them to have a meeting at the same time. Moreover, it was impossible for them to meet at a single location.

This was why it had to be this way.

(Che-sulyun-nim has entered.)

Che-sulyun-nim : Hurry up and tell me the main point of this meeting.



(Strongest Red Bulls-nim has entered.)

Strongest Red Bulls : Hello?

Che-sulyun-nim : Are you picking a fight with me?

Strongest Red Bulls : All I did was say hello?

Che-sulyun-nim : Change your nickname.

(Strongest Red Bulls-nim's nickname has been changed to Invincible Red Bulls.)

Invincible Red Bulls : ^o^

Che-sulyun-nim : You want to die?

There was a reason why the three of them had connected to this outdated chatting program.

After setting up the chatting room, the First Head of the Hyrdra guild had been waiting for the other two to show up. The first order of business for the First Head was to fight the keyboard battle going on between the Storm Queen and the Matador.

First Head : Let's stop playing around.



(The room manager has changed Che-sulyun-nim's nickname to Storm Queen.)

(The room manager has changed Invincible Red Bulls-nim's nickname to Matador.)

In a flash, the First Head cleaned up the situation, and he continued with his words.

First Head : First, I want to thank you both for connecting onto this program.

Storm Queen : Main point.

First Head : We've gained information that verifies the identity of the Corrupt Prince as Prince Dean.

Matador : As expected of the Hyrdra guild, you are much further ahead in the Main Quest. Amazing.

First Head : Thank you for the praise. However, it'll take 10 to 15 days for us to be able to finish the Quest we started. Moreover, when the Quest is finished, Prince Dean's identity will be revealed. It'll immediately start a great battle with Prince Dean.

Storm Queen : D-15?

First Head : No. The countdown will be 30 days. The Quest will



finish in its entirety in one month.

Matador : So you want us to get ready for war.

Storm Queen : Is that it?

First Head : If something changes, I'll notify you.

(Storm Queen-nim has left the room.)

Matador : Amazing. The two of us might conspire against her, yet she just left.

First Head : That is quite a meaningful statement. Do you perhaps have some kind of proposal?

Matador : I have no proposal to give. I just want to ask you a Question. How are you able to progress through the Quest so quickly?

First Head : It is a trade secret.

Matador : Then let me ask you the next question.

First Head : You have another question for me?

Matador : Have you ever received help from the Helpers?



First Head : They help out sometimes during Raids. However, in regards to the progress of the Main Scenario Quest, we don't receive any help from them.

Matador : Thank you for the answers.

(Matador-nim has left the room.)



# Chapter 117 – Prelude To The Great Battle (1)

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1.

“Hello. My name is Ahmong, and I am the lead broadcaster for this week’s Ranking show.”

“My name is Ken. I am the broadcast assistant.”

There was a uniquely shaped desk placed in the middle. It was something one would see on a news program. Three men were sitting behind the table. The first man had a silver armor on. The second one had a red robe on, and lastly, the last figure wore a white priest robe.

It was the Ahmong and Ken show.

It was a weekly program where they rated the contents related to Warlord. It was a popular show where it easily garnered 3-4 million views each episode.

“Today’s guest is from the Triple Wings guild, and he is one of the top priests in this game. We have Kipi-nim here today.”

“My name is Kipi. I’m in charge of healing the Triple Wing guild’s main Raid team from the backline. It is a pleasure to meet the viewers of the Ranking show.”



The secret to the success of the show was the fact that they used their extensive personal connections to bring on guests. Every week a User affiliated with the 30 great guilds appeared as the main guest. There was no reason to doubt their ability to book guests.

On the other hand, the content of show was quite unoriginal aside from the guests they were able to book.

“We’ll immediately start the Ranking show with Kipi-nim. What is our first ranking?”

“This week we are ranking the pay per view earnings ranking.”

The ranking show was based on provocative topics, but it was information anyone could gather on their own. The draw of the show was the conversation shared by the personalities. It was akin to gossiping behind other’s back.

Of course, this was the main reason why this show was popular.

“It is a very hot topic. This is great. Since this is a hot topic, shall we reveal the ranking from the top?”

“First place is the Red Bulls guild’s Thorn Turtle raid video.”

“Isn’t this quite atypical?”



“It is atypical. The 30 great guilds has the regular live channel broadcasting rights, and it is possible to purchase live tickets to view the raid in real time. Usually, this would lead to relatively low sales regarding paid videos. However, this one bucks that trend.”

“That’s correct. Usually, there is an inverse relationship between the number of live ticket sold and the number of paid videos sold.”

“The Red Bull’s Thorn Turtle Raid sold 1.5 million live tickets, yet over 930 thousand people purchased the paid video.”

“If we just consider this week, 200 thousand people purchased the paid video. It is incredible. As a veteran of the 30 great guilds, I would like Kipi-nim to give a more detailed explanation on why this is occurring. Please give us your opinion on this subject.”

At Ahmong’s question, Kipi immediately went into his explanation.

“Usually, 25 users are allowed to participate in the Thorn Turtle raid. As you all probably know, the video we just saw was completed using only 12 Users. They were extreme in cutting down the number of people participating in the Raid. This is why the Red Bull’s Thorn Turtle raid footage is worth analyzing.”

“It is worth analyzing?”

“If one want to analyze a footage, one has to watch it multiple times. This inevitably means one has to pay multiple times to view



the footage. Moreover, the Thorn Turtle gives pretty good Items compared to its difficulty. It also helps that we have located 3 locations where the Thorn Turtle appears. The wait time for the hunt is pretty short.”

“Does this mean the Red Bulls capitalized on this information? Did they aim for this new trend where Users are starting to analyze footage?”

“I don’t think it was done deliberately. I have no idea about the Red Bulls, but usually, these are the priorities for a guild. The first priority is to get the first kill. The second is survival. When one decreases the headcount of the Raid team, these two priorities are completely abandoned.”

“Oh-ho. As expected of an active User, your explanation is very persuasive.”

“There is a high probability that this is a training session.”

“Training session? Do you guys really do such activities?”

“Of course, we do it. It is rare to do a training session by decreasing the number of Users participating in a Raid. However, one has to do these training session purposefully to develop the ability to cope with various situations.”

“I never knew the guilds operated in such a manner. You are worth the large amount of money we spent to get you here.”



Kipi lightly let out a fake cough at the mention of the large sum of money.

“Well, it was such a thorough explanation that it seems we won’t need additional commentary on the subject. Shall we move onto the video ranked 2nd?”

“Ahmong. We already released the top honor. Wouldn’t it be boring to go on down the list starting from the second place? How about we check the top honors on the other rankings?”

“All right. We’ll check the individual pay per view video ranking. Please announce it for us, Kipi-nim.”

After a fake cough, Kipi looked at the Hologram window only he could see, and he calmly read off the prompt.

“This week’s individual pay per view video ranking’s top honor goes to....First One Sulwoo’s Warlord Diaries. In one week, he has an amazing record of 101,000 people buying his video.”

“In reality, the Perfect One is an exception to the rule. There is a stark difference in terms of figure between him and the person ranked second.”

“It isn’t an exaggeration to say that he is the only person, who could contend with the 30 great guilds by himself. Of course, the 30 great guilds focus on the live tickets, and the Perfect One focuses



on pay per view videos. It is comparing apples and oranges.”

“Do you agree with this assessment, Kipi-nim?”

“The First One’s fans are so passionate about him that I have no choice, but to agree with you guys.”

“Does that mean you don’t agree inside? Are you saying the Perfect One isn’t unique?”

“That is quite a statement.”

Kipi laughed awkwardly at Amohng and Ken’s words. He waved his hand.

As he was doing this, Kipi’s eyes was still reading the script. Everything they were saying and doing was scripted.

“I agree with you. He is an amazing person. I have a strange feeling that this will be edited in a weird way. Please be kind to me.”

“Now that I think about it, isn’t there one other person, who might contend with the 30 great guilds by himself?”

“He is in our Ranking. This is Hahoe Mask’s debut video, and it is ranked at 11. It is called the Christmas Tree’s Nightmare, and 40 thousand people purchased it this week. In total, it has been



purchased 250,000 times.”

“It is quite hard to achieve this amount of success on one’s debut video. However, we are talking about the Hahoe Mask, so it just makes me nod my head as if I had expected this result.”

“What do you think about the Hahoe Mask, Kipi-nim?”

“What is there to think about? If I could play the game like him, I have nothing else I want in this world.”

“I’m not talking about such commentaries. Do you have any rumors for us? Everyone knows the 30 great guilds have their eyes on the Hahoe Mask. You are part of the 30 great guilds, so do you know of any secrets regarding the Hahoe Mask?”

“The big question on everyone’s mind is what the Hahoe Mask actually looks like. Some say he is an incredibly handsome man, and others think he is actually a she. There are rumors that also say he is the scion of a global magnate.”

“If you know something, please throw us a bone. The editing of your earlier comments on the Perfect One hinges on the answer you give us right now.”

Ahmong and Ken was skilled in volleying questions. It reminded one of soccer players executing a perfect dribble and pass.

“I haven’t heard a lot of information regarding the Hahoe Mask...



Ah. I heard he has a bad relationship with the Big Smiles guild.”

“Ah. Is this an attempt at revenge for the previous transgression committed by the Big Smiles on your guild? Is this an attempt to create a schism between the Hahoe Mask and the Big Smiles guild?”

“As I said before, it is merely a rumor.”

“Then let us stop talking about rumors. Let us have a serious talk about the reason behind the Hahoe Mask’s popularity. Why is the Hahoe Mask so popular right now?”

Kipi thought for a brief moment when he was asked the question. The question was written on his script, but Kipi came up with his own answer.

“Mmmm..... Sulwoo is named the Perfect One, because there can only be one person, who can be the best. Hahoe Mask is the Only One. Hahoe Mask is the only one that can show us the Hahoe Mask’s style of battle.”

2.

“Stick to it! Just stick to it!”

As if they were responding to Hyrkan’s shouts, the Skeleton Warriors unhesitatingly ran towards the enemy.



The opponent was a 30 meter long Dragon with auburn scales.

In Warlord, a Dragon type monster that was 30 meters long was usually considered to be a mid sized monster.

However, this particular one wasn't classified as a mid sized monster. This bastard didn't have wings or a tail. The 30 meter in length was measured from its head to the end of its body.

It was the No Tail Dragon.

It was a level 150 Boss Monster, and the difficulty level wasn't that high compared to the other Dragon Type monsters.

At the same time, the Items that could be crafted out of the Ingredient Coins dropped by this monster wasn't that attractive. This was why it was an unpopular raid amongst the big guilds.

Of course, he considered the difficulty to be low, but it took a pretty good raid team with full preparation to be able to take this boss monster down. The No Tail Dragon's arms were very fast. Above all else, its arms were able to track its target very accurately.

This was the case right now.

The No Tail Dragon slammed a Skeleton Warrior to the floor with its paw. It was a sight reminiscent of a hammer driving in a



nail with a single blow. Hyrkan's Skeletons were great at dodging yet it wasn't able to dodge the No Tail Dragon. This was evidence of the swiftness of the No Tail Dragon.

Of course, the Skeleton Warrior didn't just die.

Kwah-jeek!

As the Skeleton Warrior was destroyed, it vomited out the Black Sap, and it splashed onto the Dragon's right paw.

Koo-roo-roo!

A mighty cry leaked out of the No Tail Dragon's mouth.

There were three Skeleton Warriors left, and they jumped on the back of the No Tail Dragon.

The No Tail Dragon's armor-like auburn leather was a mess. It was covered in wounds. It almost looked as if there were more wounded locations than intact leather. The Skeleton Warriors planted their swords into open wounds. The hard scales had already been stripped, and the No Tail Dragon's body was all flesh now. It didn't stand a chance against the swords of the Skeleton Warriors.

Poo-oohk!



The swords embedded deep into the body.

Koo-oh-oh!

At that moment, the No Tail Dragon let out a horrible shriek as it suddenly stood on its hind legs. Then it immediately fell on its back. It was trying to squash the enemies stuck to its back.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, ddul-goo-ruhk!

At that moment, the Skeleton Warriors didn't run away. They lowered their stance with their swords embedded inside the No Tail Dragon's body. They stopped moving. The destruction of the Skeleton Warriors was inevitable.

Koo-ooh-oohng!

The powerful impact created a shockwave as the ground shook.

Koo-oh-oh-oh!

After the impact, the No Tail Dragon let out a scream as the leather on its back was dyed black. Even its wounds were dyed black. The Black Sap pushed past the No Tail Dragon's rage, and it pushed it towards its throes of death.

'Is it the third phase now?'



[The No Tail Dragon's Rage has reached its climax.]

[The No Tail Dragon's Death Throes is sweeping across the surrounding!]

This was the No Tail Dragon's last ditch effort. It had activated a wide area debuff skill. The wide area debuff skill was a nightmare in a raid, but it was the signal Hyrkan had been waiting for.

[The Circlet of Purification has protected the User from the No Tail Dragon's Death Throes.]

‘This is the last phase.’

Hyrkan unsheathed the Ivan's Sword.

‘I'll become level 160 when I catch this bastard. I'll graduate from using the Ivan's Sword today.’

He thanked the Ivan's Sword. It was a sword that had supported him from level 120 to his current level. Hyrkan ran towards the No Tail Dragon. The Skeleton Knight and the Skeleton Warriors followed behind Hyrkan.

This type of battle was something that could only be shown by Hyrkan.



3.

‘250,000 people.’

While the No Tail Dragon’s corpse was melting, Hyrkan once again checked the figure of how many people purchased his video. Hyrkan licked his lips when he saw the number of 250,000 buyers.

‘I never expected such a high figure.’

After confirming the number of buyers, Hyrkan was in a state of disbelief.

‘I expected it to be around 100,000.....’

When he was running the Hahoe Mask guild, his pay per view video debuted to the number of 30,000 buyers. Everyone cheered when he received the figure. He even met Kim-dongsoo on the side to celebrate by drinking alcohol.

This time around his debut video had graded out to be 250,000 viewers. Moreover, the purchase count was increasing by the hour. The reviews from the buyers were favorable.

‘It is doing so well that it almost makes me feel uncomfortable.’

The corner of Hyrkan’s mouth twitched. He should be smiling



right now, yet he was having a hard time mustering up a smile.

This situation was clearly a boon for him. However, Hyrkan felt a sense of responsibility instead of happiness in front of this boon. There was a difference from getting donations from uploading a public video, and the money one earned through the pay per view video.

‘If my paid video doesn’t measure up to expectation, everyone will try to tear me down.’

He felt the difference in expectation deep in his bones when Hyrkan ran the Hahoe Mask guild. He had experienced the result of becoming complacent. This was why he didn’t let this result swell his head as he prepared to climb to higher places.

The No Tail Dragon Raid was part of the preparation process. He planned on uploading the No Tail Dragon raid as a public video.

‘I’ll keep putting up free videos to maintain the views on my page. I’ll produce the paid videos on the side. Which monster should I catch for my next pay per view video.... If I upload a public video right after a pay per view video, wouldn’t my intentions be too transparent? Should I upload one that I shouldn’t expect a huge profit? Or maybe I should make a weekly diary like the First One?’

“Ah. This is annoying.”



After worrying over his options, Hyrkan let out a voice of frustration.

In truth, he had been worried for several days as he worried about how his paid video would do. It was like worrying about a grade when the grade hadn't come out yet. When a good grade had come out, it put more burden on him to do better next time. He felt a sense of pressure.

This sentiment had manifested in the No Tail Dragon raid. If it was before, he would have only thought about how to kill it. Now he had to catch it in a way that it would look good on film. He had to worry about that now.

In the midst of a raid, he couldn't just pause the raid at a scary part just to re-shoot something he didn't like.

‘This is what I hate the most.’

Before he returned to the past, he had suffered quite a bit from stress. He would go through much hardship to catch a monster, but accidents were bound to happen. He would pay a high price to produce the video, yet the video would under perform on the market. It would cause his insides to hurt for several days.

‘Damned if you do, damned if you don’t.’

Hyrkan shook his head from side to side. In truth, Hyrkan had inflicted all of this on himself. He could bellyache all he want, but



he couldn't blame it on others.

Moreover, the solution to his problem was simple. If his stress piled up, he had to unwind from it.

‘I'll just check my mail.’

Hyrkan immediately connected to his e-mail. There were over several hundred emails in his inbox.

These were emails requesting him for a trade.

‘Black Cobalt King's Sword? Is this bastard trying to play me? He is gunning for the Circlet of Purification with that Item?’

Hyrkan had expressed an interest in selling the Circlet of Purification.

Hyrkan had revealed the Option of the Circlet of Purification two weeks ago. At the same time, he expressed his intention of wanting to sell it.

This immediately stirred up a storm.

Of course, the large guilds knew the value behind the Circlet of Purification's Option. They immediately requested for a trade. They all listed Items that would make anyone's mouth drop open. He felt some joy as he viewed these lists.



Moreover, he hadn't revealed his identity when he put up the Item up for sale. If it was known that Hyrkan had the Circlet of Purification, the parasites would gather around him. It would mess him up from conducting his business. Of course, he had to edit out the part where he had used the Circlet of Purification in the No Tail Dragon Raid video.

‘Still, isn't this a bit too popular? Why are the Hydra guild, Red Bulls guild, and the Stormhunters pushing so hard for this Item?’

The Circlet of Purification was up to the task in healing his sour insides. The deals being proposed was much larger than he had expected.

This was true for the guilds Hyrkan considered to be the 3 great guilds. Their offers couldn't even be compared to the rest of the 30 great guilds. When everyone was yelling out a bid of a thousand dollar, the 30 great guilds would yell out 5,000 dollars, and the 3 great guilds would yell out 10,000 dollars.

‘Moreover.....’

‘Who the hell is this guild? Why are they offering such nonsensical deals?’

It was a guild he had never heard of before. They were outbidding the 30 great guilds by a wide margin.



‘Hand guild? Are they swindlers? Are they putting up a bullshit bids?’

Hand guild.

The biggest offer had been provided by them. Their offer far outstripped the Stormhunters’ offer.

‘The big fishes are bidding big from the beginning. No matter which way I look at it, they are bidding too much.’

In truth, Hyrkan didn’t have any intention of selling the Circlet of Purification.

Hyrkan could use the Circlet of Purification until he squeezed out all the use he had for it. Even then he would be able to sell it for the price he wanted.

This was an Item that had no level restriction. Moreover, it was very hard to acquire this Item in Warlord, and it wasn’t an exaggeration to say that everyone in Warlord wanted this Item.

He had revealed this Item in spite of those factors. He had done this, because he couldn’t hide the existence of the Circlet of Purification forever. Hyrkan revealed himself regularly to the world through his videos. It wasn’t feasible to edit out the Circlet of Purification from every video.

In the end, he had to reveal his ownership of the Item.



However, he could manipulate the market, so he could maximize his profit!

‘I wasn’t planning on selling it immediately, but if I can get this much for it... No. I have to patient. Be patient.’

Normally, the value of the extremely rare items that appeared within the game was usually set on the first sale.

He could use this fact to his advantage. Hyrkan decided to set the market at a ridiculous price point.

The method was quite simple.

Currently, an unknown User had revealed the Option for the Circlet of Purification. What would happen if Hyrkan showed up after some time with the Circlet of Purification equipped?

Everyone would ask Hyrkan the question.

How much did you buy it for, Hyrkan-nim?

The price he spoke at that moment would basically set the market for the Circlet of Purification.

Of course, this method couldn’t be used for every rare Item. He could use this method on the Circlet of Purification, because this



rare Item was very versatile in its use. Before Hyrkan had returned to the past, the initial market for the Circlet of Purification had been incredibly high.

‘Yes. All of you guys should keep bidding higher. Keep moving the price higher.’

As Hyrkan had expected, a big bubble had formed regarding the current market for the Circlet of Purification.

Hyrkan was finally able to form a smile. It was a feeling akin to paying off a house, and the market price of the house starting to soar. This was how he felt.

‘Yes.’

Hyrkan remembered something at that moment, and he quickly accessed a site related to Warlord.

He immediately took a screenshot of the Circlet of Purification’s Option, and he uploaded it.

‘This is a service from me.’

He was pouring salt into the wound.



## Chapter 118 – Prelude to the Great Battle (2)

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4.

The cheap coffee was letting out a burnt smell. Ahn-jaehyun zealously put grape flavored candies into his cheap coffee, and he spoke towards the Tablet PC propped up on its stand.

“Please don’t speak such nonsense. Even if there is an insufficient supply of Black Cobalt King’s Sword, it is not worth as much as you are claiming.”

The voice recognition app picked up Ahn-jaehyun’s voice, and his words were put up as text in the chatting window. After a slight delay, the Tablet PC replied in a clear and beautiful voice.

– Since we are talking about making a deal with gold, the price has to be adjusted.

“Bullshit.”

Ahn-jaehyun was speaking to himself as he drank his coffee, and he immediately realized his mistake.

‘Shit!’

His words were immediately picked up by the app, and it transcribed his word into the chatting window. For a moment, he



forgot he was chatting through a voice recognition software, and he forgot to be careful with his words.

‘Ah. Whatever. I won’t go through with it anyways.’

Ahn-jaehyun decided to end the negotiation instead of giving an apology.

‘This negotiation is pointless. This bastard wants 200,000 gold for the Black Cobalt King’s Sword.’

Black Cobalt King’s Sword.

It was a level 160 Unique Rank Item. It was considered to be in the upper tier in terms of Options compared to Items of similar Rank. It was being traded at a very high price, because it had an Option that was very advantageous in a Boss Monster hunt. Moreover, the supply wasn’t abundant.

The seller was asking for 200,000 gold for the Item. Hyrkan could guarantee that this Item wasn’t worth 200,000 gold.

Recently, a Black Cobalt King’s Sword was sold in public through auction, and it had been sold for 150,000 gold. However, this had been an anomalous transaction. No, it wasn’t anomalous. It had been a ploy to raise the market price for the sword.

This happened from time to time. There were people, who manipulated the market for an Item in short supply as they tried to



increase their profit.

‘Is this bastard perhaps the one that wanted to trade the Circlet of Purification with the sword?’

There were also those who increased the market price, so they could trade it for a different Item.

This practice was also known as Bubble Laundry.

The Items on Warlord was sold for very high prices, so these kinds of practices happened quite frequently. Warlord was full of swindlers.

Of course, from that perspective, Ahn-jaehyun was the biggest swindler of them all. He was trying to manipulate the price of the Circlet of Purification. For example, if it was a story of someone else doing it, it sounds like an adulterous story. If one is part of that story, it sounds like a love story that can't be heard without crying.

‘You son of a bitch. If I see you in the game, you'll suffer the Watchman style.’

Ahn-jaehyun was about to grind his teeth when it happened.

– You have offended me. Let's cancel this negotiation.



In the end, the other person broke off the deal. Ahn-jaehyun immediately yelled out a warning.

“If you get caught messing with the market price of an Item, you’ll see blood! Quit your tricks.”

The words popped up immediately on the chatting window, but the other person had already left the chatting room. Ahn-jaehyun brought the coffee cup up to his annoyed face. The steam coming up from coffee fogged up Ahn-jaehyun’s glasses, but he wordlessly looked through the fog.

‘This won’t do.’

Ahn-jaehyun’s character was level 160 now, and he needed a new weapon. It wasn’t as if he couldn’t continue to use the Ivan’s Sword, but he wanted something better. Ivan’s Sword couldn’t be compared to a level 160 Unique Rank Item.

‘I also need a defensive set.’

He also needed another defensive set. The defensive set he was wearing was quite good. He wouldn’t have a problem wearing it until level 170.

The problem was the Circlet of Purification.

‘I need one that could work in combination with the Circlet of Purification.’



The Circlet of Purification's Option was unspeakably good. However, there were clear demerits to the Item.

The biggest downside was its defense. One couldn't rely on its defense unlike the normal helms. It wasn't as if those in Warlord wore helmets that covered the entirety of one's face, but it was dangerous to leave one's head bare. Of course, this was the case for the normal Users. Ahn-jaehyun had Bone Armor, so he was in a slightly better position.

The second demerit was the fact that it was counted as a helm when wearing a normal set. Basically, when one wore the Circlet of Purification, the Set Option that activated when one wore 5 parts disappeared. In truth, this was what troubled Ahn-jaehyun the most.

This was why he needed a new defensive set that worked well with the Circlet of Purification.

‘The Skeleton Panda set seems ok....’

He actually had an Item in mind that met his requirement.

Skeleton Panda set.

The attack Option was a bit lacking, but it was a set with great defense and mobility Options. This set was mainly used as a switching set for both the Tankers and Strikers. Of course, the



caliber of Users who used this Item were those in the 30 great guild's first string Raid teams.

For normal Users, they couldn't even dream about using it as a switching set. They could only dream about one day wearing the Item.

Fortunately, there was a good number of the set released into the market. The Skeleton Panda set was a Rare Rank Item, and the Skeleton Panda was considered to be a large size monster. This meant a good amount of Ingredients were dropped when a Skeleton Panda was taken down.

The problem was.....

‘There is no one in their right mind, who would make a Skeleton Panda Set, with its Helm missing.’

However, what Ahn-jaehyun wanted wasn't on the market.

A set consisted of the Armor, Greaves, Gloves, Shoulder, Boots, Helm, and Shield.

The defensive set was divided into 7 Items.

First, the shield was treated like a separate Item from the set. The shield was very useful, but at the same time, it had a high chance of being destroyed in battle.



Amongst the 6 parts left, 5 parts were combined to make a set Item. The Helm, Armor and Greaves were always included in making a set. The remaining two parts depended on a User's preference. There were some, who left out the boots. Others chose to exclude the gloves.

Of course, all the Set items on the market had the Helm as a matter of course. Since Ahn-jaehyun had to wear the Circlet of Purification, he needed a set with no helm. In the end, he would have to custom order a set or he had to acquire the Ingredients.

The problem was the fact that the Ingredients were much more expensive than the already made Items.

‘Should I look up the price? Yes. I should look up the price. It doesn't cost me any money to do that.’

Ahn-jaehyun wordlessly drank his coffee as he used the auction search function to find out the exact price of the Ingredients. The hand lifting his coffee cup was shaking. Ahn-jaehyun didn't have Parkinson's disease. The fact that his hands were shaking meant that the price was very high.

“Fucking crazy game.”

Ahn-jaehyun spoke words that was as bitter as his coffee.

‘Shit. Do I really have to give up real money to buy it? How come



the Ingredients cost 20,000 gold more than the complete product? How does that make any sense?’

Ahn-jaehyun spat out his anger.

Ahn-jaehyun started tapping on the Tablet PC’s calculator before his anger could subside.

He was stronger than anyone in front of monsters, but he was the weakest at impulse purchases. That was Ahn-jaehyun.

5.

“Ready!”

At Chev’s shout, the ten Strikers on standby gritted their teeth. Their mouth was tightly shut, but they were all talking to themselves.

‘This is driving me nuts.’

‘Uh-whew. This is worse than the time I received Basic Combat Training from the army.’

Eventually the Thorn Turtle stomped its right front leg against the ground.



Koohng!

The ground shook. As the Thorn Turtle let out a roar, long and sharp needles grew all over its body, and it was shot towards the Users like arrows.

“Bang!”

When the gun noise came out of Chev’s mouth, the ten Strikers rushed towards the Thorn Baptism. One would be too late if one dodged after seeing the needles, and it wasn’t possible to accidentally dodge the barrage. They had to dodge the thorns using their instincts.

Koohng!

As soon as they dodged the attack, the Thorn Turtle moved its left foot. It once again fired a volley of thorns, and the ten Strikers had all their senses on high alert as they got ready to dodge again. However, they had closed the distance with the Thorn Turtle, and the time they had to get ready for the attack had been reduced significantly.

In the end, one gave up on the second volley as the User pulled out to the back. Three more Strikers gave up on the third volley of the Thorn Baptism. Four people gave up on the fourth volley of the Thorn Baptism. When the Thorn Baptisms came to an end, only two Strikers had reached the Thorn Turtle.



Chev closed his mouth tightly when he saw the sight.

‘We’ve been practicing for a month, yet only two people can do it. If I include myself, that is only 3 Users. I thought I would have at least five. How unfortunate.’

They were training right now.

The great battle with the Immoral Prince was approaching, and they were training with that event in mind.

Instead of leveling or incrementally increasing their Specs, it was more important for them to be able to respond to various situations.

No one knew how the battle would be conducted.

Moreover, Red Bulls and most of the skilled Users of the 30 great guilds were specialized at Raid Style battles. They were unparalleled in terms of hunting large sized monsters. However, their skills in small scale warfare and overcoming numerical disadvantage was lacking compared to their Raid skills.

This was a weakness possessed by all the 30 great guilds. Moreover, overcoming this weakness would determine if they’ll cry or smile at the end of the battle.

“We’ll do it five more times. Don’t disturb the monsters. The Tankers have to last until the cool time of the Thorn Baptism



ends.”

Of course, the guild members were training instead of hunting. This was hell for them.

‘I can’t believe we are doing this by purposefully letting the monster live.’

‘Our guild master is too fierce.’

However, the Red Bulls guild members had it better than the Stormhunters guild members. In the case of the the Stormhunters guild, they had to face someone else on top of fighting the monsters.

“Dodge! Open both your eyes as you dodge! Hatch! Why aren’t you moving faster?”

“I’m moving!”

“Hahui!”

“I’m sorry, Queen! I’ll stay focused!”

“We are in a game. If you want to say you are tired, just quit!

“Yes.”



Shir yelled at them, and the 1st string Raid team of the Stormhunters guild moved busily through the rampaging monsters. The magicians threw their magic and the Tankers were using every method they could devise to protect the mages as the monsters targeted them. When the Tankers stood up the monsters, the Strikers immediately moved in. The priests ran back and forth in the chaos as they revived dead Users. They also recast new Buffs as the old ones expired.

“We are in the last 5 minutes.”

Unlike their movements from before, the Users moved more frantically when Shir informed them of the time.

‘If we don’t get the timing right this time, I’m ending this.’

‘The guild master is scarier than the monsters..’

‘I’m leaving this guild when my contract ends. If only my contract was at an end... Shit.’

The guild members felt it through their bodies that Shir became much scarier when her voice calmed down.

In Shir’s case, she thought differently from Chev. If Chev was trying to increase their ability to respond to any situation, Shir was the opposite. She wanted to hunt down as many monsters as quickly as possible.



‘If we want to catch a lot of them, we have to catch them fast.’

At that moment, another guild was using a different method from these two guilds to get ready for the war.

6.

“I don’t believe it.”

The very serious tone was coming out of a being with a youthful appearance. Bagel, the protector of the Terube castle walls, shook its head from side to side.

Hydra’s eighth head Natal was standing in front of Bagel. Natal spoke once again towards Bagel.

“You have to believe me.”

“Prince Dean has worked the hardest in winning the war against the monsters.”

“However, all the information I have brought you is pointing towards Prince Dean.”

“That is.....”



“Wasn’t Bagel-nim the one who gave me all these Missions?”

Bagel.

He was the guardian of the Terube castle walls, and he managed the battlefields. He was also the right hand man of Prince Dean, and the Hydra guild had decided to go through the Quest route that passed through Bagel.

Bagel was a member of the Secret Society. However, he had served Prince Dean his whole life, so he was beyond shocked when he found out that Prince Dean was the one using the power of Corruption. Of course, Bagel tried to deny this fact.

However, Natal had brought a flag, and it was an irrefutable evidence that pointed out Prince Dean as the hidden power behind the Corrupted Army.

Bagel shut his eyes. Natal closely observed Bagel.

The Hydra guild was able to progress much faster in Quests compared to others, because they were very serious about the Quests. This was only a game to others, so they only half-listened to the Quest conversation. However, this wasn’t true for the Hydra guild.

They didn’t think of the game as reality. However, they were fully immersed into the game. In the end, the game was made with a purpose in mind. There was a reason behind the existence of



every content in the game. If one could find the meaning behind their existence, that information could become a clue. This was what the Hydra guild believed, and this belief brought incredible results.

There was no way Bagel knew what Natal was thinking. Bagel laboriously opened its mouth.

“I’ll go meet with Prince Dean myself.”

At that moment...

[The Quest ‘Bagel’s Loyalty’ has started.]

Natal heard the Quest Announcement in his ears. Natal quickly calculated in his mind.

‘I’ll have to go with Plan B. So the option left to me is.....’

When Bagel met Prince Dean, Bagel will immediately ask about the Corrupted Army. This will unmask Prince Dean. Prince Dean had been appointed the Guardian of the North by the King, yet it’ll become known that he had been aiming to steal the king’s seat as the Immoral Prince.

This will lead to the start of a war.



“It’ll be dangerous.”

“If Prince Dean is really behind everything... My life will be forfeit. There will be no clearer evidence than him killing me.”

“That’ll be a pointless death. The evidence is already irrefutable. I won’t let Bagel-nim die in vain.”

“I’ve served Prince Dean my entire life, yet I hadn’t been able to stop him from being Corrupted. It is a sin that is worthy of death.”

At that moment, two choices presented itself in front of Natal.

Should he follow Bagel to meet Prince Dean? Or should he let Bagel go by himself, and watch him die?

Normal Users would choose the option that was within the User’s ability. It was the same for Natal.

‘There is a Block Field beyond the Terube castle walls. If I consider all the conversations I had with Bagel regarding the Battlefield stage, there is something beyond beyond the Terube castle walls. There is an important region beyond the northern Block Field. It’s probably something much bigger in scale compared to the recently discovered Cursed Castle. Moreover, there is a high probability that Bagel will be the main NPC if an event does occur...’



However, Natal and the Hydra guild's ability couldn't be compared to the normal Users.

‘There is a high probability that Bagel won't die. Maybe if I follow him, I might earn some merit afterwards.’

“I will go with you.”

Bagel shook its head at Natal's words.

“I won't allow you to put yourself in danger.”

“No matter what I do from now on I'll have to put my life on the line. That won't change even now”

At those words, Bagel opened his tightly shut eyes.

“Thank you, Natal. If it wasn't for your help... When everything ends and if I'm still alive, I will serve you for the rest of your life.”

Serve.

Natal smiled at the word.



# Chapter 119 – Prelude The Great Battle (3)

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7.

“Go!”

At Sohank’s shout, Natal started running away with Bagel on his back. Natal didn’t hesitate at all as he moved his feet.

The Corrupted Centaurs wore full armor that made them look more knightly than most knights. Sohank didn’t show any hesitations as he faced 10 Corrupted Centaurs.

‘Even if I die, it’ll only be for 48hrs. Let’s do this!’

Instead of running away, Sohank used his Charge skill to run towards the approaching group of Centaurs. Sohank was charging like a mad bull, and he used Body Slam to send the leading Centaur flying. The Centaur was 4 meters long, and it was 3 meters in height. The massive body of the Centaur was thrown backwards just like that.

At the same time, the Centaur closest to Sohank thrust its spear accurately towards Sohank’s head.

Shweeek!

The sound of destruction coming towards him was frightening.



Ggahhng!

Sohank's response to the sound of destruction was to use the Heading skill. Instead of avoiding the spear coming towards his head, he used Heading to deflect the attack.

It was inelegant, but the result was indisputable. The spear bounced off his head, and the Centaur showed an opening. Sohank didn't miss capitalizing on the opening that was created. Several skills were stacked on the sword, and Sohank swung it towards the Centaur's forelegs.

Kwah-jeek!

Sohank's sword strike broke both its forelegs. When the Centaur lost its use of its forelegs, it fell over. Sohank punched the fallen Centaur's head.

Ggwahhng!

It was a single punch, but the Centaur's body shook uncontrollably as it lay on the floor.

It was a level 170 Unique Skill exclusive to the Fighter class. It was called Concussion Punch.

The skill had the powerful effect of causing a Stun status, and the



skill was worth its price. It was such an expensive skill that one had a hard time acquiring it even if one had money.

Of course, Sohank possessed a skill that was more expensive than the Concussion Punch.

“Awoooooo!”

A wolf’s cry exploded forth from Sohank’s mouth.

Howling!

It was a level 190 Unique Skill exclusive to the Fighter class. It was the last skill one could get as a Fighter Class, who had gone through only the 1st Advancement.

It had the effect of adding an additional 10% damage to the monsters in the surrounding for a limited amount of time! It also reduced the damage the User took by 10%!

At the same time, it gave the Fear effect to the surrounding monsters. It also had secondary Option of pulling the aggro.

Currently, there were only two Fighter class Users in Warlord who possessed this skill. The skill was possessed by the First One Sulwoo, and the Second Head Sohank.

Several Corrupted Centaurs had ignored Sohank as they were



about to chase after Natal, who was running away with Bagel on his back. The Howling had the effect of focusing all the attention of the Corrupted Centaur on him.

In a flash, Sohank was surrounded.

Sohank laughed at his own situation.

‘Mission complete.’

Sohank’s role was to make sure there were no pursuers following after Natal. Natal understood this fact, so he immediately stopped running. He checked up on Bagel’s condition.

“Are you ok, Bagel-nim?”

When meeting with Prince Dean, Bagel had observed decorum as he took off the heavy armor he always wore. Instead, Bagel had worn luxurious clothes one might see on an entertainer. However, Prince Dean wasn’t there to greet Bagel.

“I’m all right. I avoided the critical blow.”

“Still, you are bleeding heavily.”

“If such a flesh wound could kill me, someone else would have already taken my place as the caretaker of the Terube castle walls by now. Moreover, I refuse to die by Agardo’s hands.”



Sir Agardo.

He was a blonde haired knight, who was known as the left hand of Prince Dean. He had disguised himself as Prince Dean, and he had been waiting for Bagel. Bagel tried to observe etiquette by kneeling on one knee with his head lowered. As soon as Bagel was raising his lowered head, a sword stabbed towards Bagel's heart.

In that brief moment, Bagel avoided the attack. As a result, Sir Agardo's sword pierced through Bagel's shoulder instead of his heart. Afterwards, Bagel let out a counterattack, and he was able to escape the room. Natal and Sohank had been on standby, and they attempted to escape with Bagel. Natal let out a sigh when he exited the castle.

'I was fortunate.'

[You've earned the Title 'Those who Helped Bagel Escape'.]

[You've earned the Title 'Bagel's Savior'.]

[You've earned the Title 'Observer of History'.]

At that moment, the consecutive Announcement rang out in his ears to announce the three titles he had earned.

Sohank used the Voice Talk to speak to Natal. Sohank was far away from Natal now.



– Natal! Did you also get the Titles?

Sohank's voice was still overflowing with energy.

“How are you faring?”

– I did well in taking down five of them, but it seems I'll be taken down soon!

Even though he was about to die, Sohank's voice was upbeat. Sohank was that type of a person. If he died, he died. He'll just catch up on dramas he missed for the next 48 hours! This was how he played the game.

Of course, from the Hydras guild's perspective, this trait worried them the most about him.

“If you hold out a little bit longer, the support team will be there!”

– I don't think I'll be able to hold out any longer.

Sohank was Hydra guild's best fighting power. The very best Items and Skill Books they gained was given to Sohank first. For the Hyrda guild, he was like a walking treasure box, yet he treated himself without much care. This frustrated the other officers of the Hydra guild to no end.



‘Shit. I still need more time until the support team arrives.’

Sohank and Natal were the only two allowed to participate in the meeting with Bagel and Prince Dean.

Still, they had prepared a contingency plan. There was a support team on standby, but they were a long distance away.

As with any business, it wasn’t easy for the support team to arrive on time. They only moved if something went wrong. The support team stayed in place until that actually happened.

If Natal’s calculations were correct, the support team needed 5 minutes until they would be able to arrive near Sohank.

– The support team is here!

“What?”

Unlike Natal’s prediction, the support team arrived immediately.

– Uh? Why are you guys here so early?

Sohank was surprised.

– We received an order from the First Head. When Prince Dean



insisted on a private meeting with Bagel, we were told to go to the agreed escape route.

“You should have told me about it earlier!”

Natal yelled out as if he was angry, but there was no signs of anger on his face.

‘As expected of our guild, everyone is quick thinking.’

He had just escaped danger, so there was no reason to feel bad.

“What’s going on?”

Natal looked as if he was talking to himself. Of course, Bagel didn’t understand what was going on, so Bagel asked Natal a question.

Natal shut his mouth.

“It is nothing. I was just talking to myself.”

“This situation is urgent. These facts.... We have to notify the Secret Society.”

“I’ll inform them.”



When he said those words, Bagel immediately handed over its Secret Society Ring, and a letter soaked in blood.

“Please deliver this to Ahimbree.”

[The Quest ‘Prelude to the Great Battle’ has started.]

“Yes. Of course, I will deliver it to him.”

That moment was the start of a new age.

8.

[This is an announcement.]

‘Huh?’

When Hyrkan connected to the game, an announcement immediately arrived.

‘What kind of announcement?’

There were usually two types of announcement. The first type



was from the creator of Warlord, Tobot Soft, sending out an important announcement. The other instance was when there was a change to a currently progressing Quest. If it was an issue regarding an electronic gear, Hyrkan would have known about it before he accessed the game. He was one of the numerous Users, who gathered and organized new informations before he connected to the game. This type of information gathering was a basic of basics for those who earn their keep through playing this game.

This meant this was an announcement related to a Quest.

‘Can it be?’

Before Hyrkan could check the exact content of the announcement, he already had a hunch on what this was about.

Moreover, Hyrkan’s hunch was right on the money.

[NPC Maeung and every quest related to him will be restricted from progressing.]

Progress Restricted!

This wasn’t just any NPC. His progress in the Maeung’s Quests was restricted!



‘Someone stepped on the Prince Dean’s tail.’

It was the start to the great battle.

‘Who was it? It couldn’t be the Storm Hunters, since they were on the same Quest Route as me. Was it the Red Bulls? Or was it some guild outside of the 3 great guilds?’

Hyrkan had his suspicions, but he decided not to act based on his suspicions.

He didn’t have much time. Hyrkan wasn’t the only one, who noticed the change. A great number of Warlord Users probably realized what was happening, and they’ll immediately mobilize.

If everyone suddenly moved at the same time, the person who got up first would beat the traffic jam. He had to go meet Maeung before the traffic congestion occurred, and he had to receive the new Quest.

This was why Hyrkan was running full tilt towards the Bulkas mountain range. He had been waiting for this. There would be confusion caused by Maeung’s disappearance, and he had the secret note given to him by the Bulkas’ Ranger.

9.

It was a forest.



This forest was like the Elven villages. Only select Users could enter it. However, Users had come to circle around the forest like a pack of hyenas.

“Shit! I lost it again!”

“It seems they are planning on taking everything. Isn’t this a bit too much?”

They had come here to eat the scraps, yet they were left to sucking on their thumbs. Of course, they vented their frustrations.

Moreover, the people online were also in an uproar.

– Isn’t the Maeung’s side incredible? Someone caught sight of Ballista and the Storm Princess moving together.

– I think all of Red Bulls is moving on towards here.

– Hahoe Mask! The Hahoe Mask has appeared!

The Main Scenario Quest had been progressing on the down low, and this moment was when the front-runners were revealed.

This information caused a ruckus, and it was impossible for the user base to stay composed.



Those who carried out the Main Scenario Quests faithfully gathered in one place to fight the Immoral Prince. The atmosphere between them was frigid.

Even though some of them saw each other on a regular basis, they didn't even give each other a smile.

It was the same when Hyrkan appeared. Usually, the reaction to Hyrkan's appearance was quite predictable. Usually, the Users became surprised as they conversed with each other or they glared at him with an annoyed expression.

However, everyone was silent as they focused their attention on Hyrkan. They merely registered the Hahoe Mask as a new rival in their minds. Even the Storm Princess, who had been going crazy wanting to beat Hyrkan with her own two hands, was standing still.

What other explanation was needed?

Hyrkan was also acting in a similar fashion.

He looked at the noteworthy Users. Even though the Stormhunters guild members were present, Hyrkan didn't get angry.

'It's the Storm Princess and Ballista. Have they started dating? Or did they start dating at a later date?'



Everyone just too note of who was present here.

They kept their mouth shut as they waited. Several more people were joined the pool of rivals. After a brief amount of time, Maeung finally appeared.

“Prince Dean has finally revealed his evil influence!”

After he appeared, Maeung went into a one-sided speech.

“I don’t have the time to get into the details.”

First, Maeung made sure no one would ask him questions.

“Prince Dean... No, the Immoral Prince used the power of Corruption to form the Corrupted army. Moreover, this army is filled with powerful and scary beings. This horde will move to swallow this world.”

The Users gathered here had invested a great amount of time, effort and money into the Main Scenario Quests over a several month span. In the end, they were being gathered under the same coat of arms.

One would expect them to feel despondent, but no one present here fidgeted from being let down. The anxiousness of waiting for a new mission blew away any let down they would have felt.



“Ours first task is to save the continent from this war!”

The Users were listening to the speech with serious expressions. This was evidence that the Users present weren't feeling letdown.

“Furthermore, our second task is to defeat the Immoral Prince!”

Most of the Users had a smile as excitement overtook their expressions.

“Our third task is is to save the world from the fear caused by the power of Corruption!”

[The Quest 'Great Battle' will start.]

He couldn't help, but also be excited.

‘Oh oh oh!’

‘I'll be the protagonist this time.’

This was a scary venture, but at the same time, they were the selected few. They'll be given a chance to open a treasure chests with incredible value.



Who wouldn't feel excited by such news?

There was exactly one person who wasn't.

'Ah. I remember now.'

Hyrkan was the only one who didn't have an excited smile on his face. His lips turned down as it settle into a frown.

'At the time, the Users ignorantly launched attacks, and it had been quite the spectacle to see them wiped out.'

Hyrkan knew what would happen. The great battle that'll start from this point was much more difficult than any battles everyone in this game had experience before.

This was the reason why Hyrkan was confident in himself.

'I have good enough odds in this great battle.'

10.

[This will be the start of Warlord's second Main Scenario Quest. It is the last chapter of the 'Immoral Prince' chapter!]

[It is the Great Battle!]



[Those with the bracelet can participate in the Immoral Prince Raid. Let us find out who possesses the bracelets!]

[The Hydras guild revealed the identity of the Immoral Prince. Exclusive interview!]

The start of the great battle created a bigger ripple effect than expected. Of course, the portion of the media that focused their topics around Warlord talked about it. However, even the media that had been disinterested in the game quickly moved to push out articles related to Warlord. In Japan, the news programs reported on contents relating to the great battle.

Even those who had been disinterested in Warlord were paying more interest now. Of course, the Warlord Users and the fans, who enjoy watching the game, wouldn't stay calm for this. They all gathered online, and their interest was intense like a molten lava.

– Yes. This is it!

– This Main Scenario Quest is a jackpot. Aren't normal Users able to participate?

– We can't participate in the Immoral Prince Raid, so how is this a jackpot for us? It was the same with the Corrupt Count. In the end, didn't the Users, who already have a lot, benefit the most? This is a really dirty game. I don't know why I play this game.

└ This bastard will be cut down by the Immoral Prince in 3 seconds.



└ I predict 2 seconds.

└ I bet my V gear that we wouldn't be able to last 1 second.

– I've never fought a Corrupted monster before. Just being able to fight them will be a reward in itself.

– I feel the same way. Always, will we be able to gain the Pursuer of Corruption title from fighting these Corrupted monsters?

– There is a rumor that says the Corrupted Items will start dropping again!

– Really? It'll be a jackpot if Corrupted Items appears.

The Warlord Users were a hopeful bunch. No... They were filled with romanticism more so than hopefulness. The Main Scenario Quest was like a story from a different world, but they became filled with romanticism when they realized they would be able to enjoy a part of the Main Scenario Quest.

– The Corrupt Army has appeared at the Bulkas mountain range! They are level 100 monsters!

– Wow! Let's go immediately and kill them!

– I'm gathering a team to fight the Corrupt army. Anyone above



level 100 may join.

The Users were full of romanticism, and there wasn't a single inkling of fear as they charged into battle.

However, when the romanticism inside the battlefield....

- What the hell? Why are they so strong?

- The difficulty level is fucked up!

- Warlord is really a dirty game.

...immediately turned into lamentation.



# Chapter 120 – Bad Ending? (1)

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1.

“Get ready, Magicians! Be ready!”

King Marciba of the Hiban Kingdom was located at the center of the continent. The Azman castle was located at the southeast edge of the kingdom. There was a tower that was much taller than the Class tower located there.

It was named the Azman’s Tower, and occasionally, Users gained the qualification to be able to climb to the top of the tower through Quests. If one gained the rare opportunity to climb to the top of the tower, one won’t find anything special there. Instead, one will be able to see through the numerous windows that lay open on top of the tower. One would be able to see the great plains surrounding the Azman castle.

This sight alongside the Clapper Jungle was part of the 10 great sceneries one could view in Warlord.

“The monsters are a stone’s throw away. How long do you want us to be on standby?”

“The battle line of Tankers is being pushed back! If we are going to attack, we have to attack now!”

“These Tanker bastards keep making me want to swear. Hold the



line a little bit better, you retards!”

Currently, there was a never before seen chaos occurring on the great plains of Daewoo.

The Corrupted army consisting of all sorts of monsters. They were of varying levels, but they all possessed weapons and black pupils. They were heading towards the Azman castle. An army consisting of several thousand monsters were attacking. It looked as if a tide was coming in.

The Tankers were wearing bulky armors that doubled their body size. The Tankers held out shields that would easily cover their entire body. Their role was to to block the tide from coming in.

It was a collision of one battle line against another!

It was reminiscent of that particular blockbuster movie that based its subject matter on a great battle.

The reality of being in such a battle was different from watching it through a movie screen.

The battle line was gone.

“The line is broken over here!”

“The line on our side broke too! Help us a little bit!”



“We are trapped! Help! Help!”

The line was looking like a zigzag, and even that was being pushed out of existence. The battle line created by the Tankers was already gone. There had been Users that had been steamrolled, and it caused the battle line to be cut to pieces. Moreover, there were Users, who had charged forward through their own volition, and now they were stranded away from the battle line.

This was why a war was difficult. A kid could line up troops in a straight line. However, it was a whole different task to fortify, maintain and adapt the line. Even famed generals in history had a hard time doing this task.

Moreover, this army was using a voice talk program to talk to each other. The line of communication was complicated like a spider web, and this issue had pushed the situation towards a worse outcome.

At first, it hadn't been a problem. Of course, problems crop up as time passes, and various issues start to pile up on each. When the pile get sufficiently large, it creates an explosive situation.

This was the point when the pile of issues was about to explode.

“Uh. Someone threw a magical spell?”

“What? Are we suppose to throw it now? Didn't they tell us to be



on standby?”

“Look over there! Someone just threw one!”

“Whatever. Let’s throw it first and worry about it later!”

No one knew the timing of the magical bombardment. The magicians had been on standby with their Casting completed. They started throwing their magical spells. None of the magic spells being sent forward was crappy. Each magicians had prepared a magical spell they considered to be their best magic.

When these magical spells reached the battlefield, the sight was incredible.

The ground turned into a sea of fire as it boiled, and the clear sky was filled with consecutive thunder strikes. Between the thunder strikes, fire arrows and ice arrows rained down. One could also hear a knife-like wind sweeping across the battlefield.

The monsters cried out when they were confronted with magic. One couldn’t find a single commonality amongst their appearance, but they all were susceptible to the damage of magic.

“Ah. Really! Those sons of a bitches magicians!”

“I’ll kill all the mages!”



“Help! Help! Don’t runaway priests!”

However, the Tankers mixed in with the monsters shared the same weakness.

If one was able to yell out, one was fortunate. There were Tankers, whose HP had been in a bad place from the continuous battle. Then there were the Tankers with bad Item settings where their magic defense and resistance to elements was low. These Tankers alongside the low level Users suffered Game Over before they could even yell out.

In such a situation, the priests were the stopgap measure placed to right the ship, but they weren’t rushing into the battle.

The Tankers were asking for help, but the priests were wondering if they should charge in. They would have to accept the risk, yet they would be helping out Users they had never met before until today. They agonized over the decision.

Most of the Users gathered at the great plains of Daewoo agonized over similar questions they were confronted with.

Several Users quick arrived at an answer.

“Hey. Let’s run away.”

“Yeah.”



“No one has the answer here. Even if we fight on, wouldn’t we just die in the end?”

The answer was to run away.

When running a war, the most important detail one had to pay attention to was desertion. There were cases where one killed deserters on the spot to curb desertion. Desertion was a reality of war.

However, this wasn’t really a real war where their life and the fate of their country was hanging on a balance. Wasn’t this just a game?

The Users, who chose to run away, didn’t hesitate. They quickly carried out the practical option presented to them.

The Users started to run away. Funnily enough, the deserters acted in almost a synchronized fashion. It was as if everyone had decided to run away at the same moment. They were finally able to form a proper battle line. The retreat was impeccable.

On the other side, the Corrupt army had taken a lot of damage, yet they calmly marched on. They stepped over the corpses of their comrade, and there weren’t any Users left to impede them. They charged towards the Azman castle wall.

Koong koong koong!



The charging monsters reformed their broken battle line. The sound of the ground shaking was incredible as the battle line approached the castle walls.

‘What a mess.’

Hyrkan had been watching the battle from start to finish from atop the castle wall. Hyrkan kept snorting in derision. The sight he had witnessed up until now was that absurd.

‘The Azman castle will fall today.’

Hyrkan would bet his entire net worth on the fact that the Azman castle will be in the hands of the Corrupted army.

However, this was the situation he had been waiting for.

‘Shall I start getting ready for battle?’

2.

[Your level has increased.]

His HP and Magic Power was replenished through the Level Up Bonus. Hyrkan grabbed a fistful of Bone Explosives, and he threw



them into the air. The Bone Explosives were small, but they expanded as if they were sponges soaked in water. Then it descended on top of the monster.

Kwah-gwah-gwahng!

The Bone Explosives detonated with a loud boom, and its effect was considerable. The explosion caused by the Bone Explosives ruthlessly crushed and destroyed the armors worn by the monster. The skill's Proficiency had reached Rank A, so he had to use pretty expensive Bone Ingredients to craft it.

‘Ah, my money!’

The Bone Explosives were so powerful that it even made Hyrkan queasy in the stomach.

The Skeleton Warriors charged towards the Corrupted Twin Head Troll, who had lost its defensive gears. While the Skeleton Warriors took care of business, Hyrkan climbed a still intact roof to survey his surrounding.

‘Aigo.....’

The sight of the Azman castle came into view, and it was a terrible sight. A good number of buildings had fallen. However, as if this didn't satisfy the monsters, numerous monsters were charging towards the Asman's Tower.



There were pocket of resistance in various locations inside the city, which had kept the castle from falling until now. However, it seemed unlikely the street battles would stop the advance of the Corrupted Army.

Hyrkan pursed his lips as he watched the sight.

‘Isn’t this the 55th fallen castle within this week? I’m pretty sure all the battles at other sites went poorly. Then.... Ah. I don’t know.’

It had been a week since the great battle had started.

Hyrkan had gained three levels within the week. The level up pace was incredibly fast.

The secret to his success was the street battles!

When the monsters entered into the city, Hyrkan used the buildings to his advantage. He would block the traffic of monsters, and he would attack from all sides. Basically, he was hunting at the edge of the Corrupted army. The merit one would gain in fighting the Corrupted army out in the wide open plains wasn’t that high compared to the risk one took. Hyrkan was well aware of this fact.

On the other hand, Hyrkan’s incredible level up pace meant that he had conducted countless street battles, and this meant the castle was constantly on the verge of falling.



‘My pace is faster by several times compared to the pace I experienced before I came to the past.’

This was why Hyrkan welcomed the current situation.

The great battle was like playing a conquest game.

Currently, there were a total of 519 castles that had been released to the Users. The Corrupted army lead by the Immoral Prince and the Users were in a war that was akin to capturing and controlling territories.

In truth, Hyrkan didn't worry himself about this part of the war. Before he returned to the past, over 30 castles had fallen in a week when the undisciplined battles with the Users were carried out. However, the 30 great guilds eventually stepped forward, and they changed the tide of the war. The advance of the Corrupted army slowed. Before the Immoral Prince was killed, about 40 castles were constantly being changed hands by the Users and the Corrupted army.

‘The 30 great guild has to move soon.....’

However, double the number of castles had been taken right now compared to before. The main cause was the disorganized nature of the Users, but it was also the fault of the 30 great guilds. They weren't participating in the great battle as if they had all come to an agreement not to participate in it. It wasn't as if individuals from the 30 great guilds didn't participate in the great battle. However, they moved at an individual level instead of a guild level.



‘This is a bit fishy.’

If the 30 great guilds didn’t participate in earnest, the great battle would proceed into an unfavorable outcome.

‘Will they close down the game service if the Immoral Prince gains the throne? No way.’

Hyrkan thought about the worst case scenario as he stuck out his tongue from between his lips.

‘There is no way they’ll do that.’

Even he thought that was a ridiculous notion.

‘The 30 great guilds aren’t idiots. They’ll have to start moving soon.’

Kwahng!

While Hyrkan was deep in thoughts, a big portion of the castle wall fell.

Koo-goo-goo-goo!

As the loud sound of the castle wall falling down rang out, the



ground shook. The ground shook as if there was an earthquake, and it shook his vision. From across the fallen castle wall, Hyrkan could see the Corrupted army pour in. It was as if a dam had just broke.

Hyrkan checked his Skeleton Warriors from the side of his eyes. The Skeleton Warriors had already killed the monster, and they were waiting for their next order. Instead of giving the Skeleton Warriors an order, he changed them back into Skeleton Fragments.

It was time for him to run away.

3.

“The officer’s meeting came to an end not too long ago. The V&V guild decided not to participate in the great battle.”

“They made a wise decision.”

“We took Sinclair-nim’s advice. We decided there were too much downside in stepping forward so early.”

“No. It wasn’t an advice... It feels like I might have said something unnecessary.”

“No way. Your counsel was a big help for us.”



Sinclair finished exchanging information with the officer of the V&V guild. After he gave a slight bow, he turned his back. After several steps, Sinclair mumbled to himself in a very low voice.

“The V&V guild won’t participate in the great battle.”

– You did well.

An answer arrived immediately through the voice talk program.

“What about the others?”

– Including the V&V guild, 7 guilds have expressed their intent for non-participation.

Non-participation.

At those words, Sinclair had a strangely unsatisfied expression on his face. His expression indicated he wasn’t upset, but his lips jutted out a little bit.

“Seven guilds..... If couple more guilds join them, the flow of public opinion might be swayed to a different direction.”

– Maybe. We’ll have to wait and see.

When one heard the voice of the other person, it seemed he also



fount current result to be unsatisfactory.

Sinclair once again judged the distance between the officers of the V&V guild. When he gained some more distance, Sinclair's voice got louder in volume.

“What about those three guilds?”

4.

“Why aren't we running the great battle?”

It had been awhile since Hatch had free time within the game. He had been watching a new movie when Hahui asked him a question. He gave his answer.

“I have no idea.”

Chul-kuhk!

Hahui partially unsheathed the sword on her waist, and she sheathed it. When he heard the distinct sound of steel, Hatch paused the movie.

“Why don't you ask your question to the Queen you like so much? Why do you keep bothering me?”



“Tell me.”

“Huh huh. You are the one asking me for a favor, yet the words coming out of your mouth make me wonder if that is the case.”

“You want me to beat you?”

Hatch gritted his teeth at Hahui's words. He had on an expression akin to an animal growling. However, Hatch managed to pull his lower lip over his upper lip as he shut his mouth. If Hatch had his way, he would teach Hahui a lesson. However, when it came down to a life or death battle, it was unclear as to who will be chastised. This was why he held himself back.

“This. We can't run it because of this.”

Hatch shook the bracelet on his wrist.

The bracelet was giving off a soft light. It was an Item given out by the Secret Society. It qualified them to be able to fight the Immoral Prince..

It's official name was the Battle Token.

It didn't possess any Options that would increase one's Stats. However, when the time for the Immoral Prince Raid arrives, the bracelet would indicate the location of the Immoral Prince. This was why it was called the Battle Token.



Moreover, this bracelet was given only to the members of the Secret Society or those who gained the Destroyer of Corruption title.

On top of it all, there was also a special exemption given to those who participated in the Corrupt Count raid. Basically, anyone from the Red Bulls and Stormhunters, who participated in the Corrupt Count Raid, possessed the qualification to be able to participate in the Immoral Prince raid. These two guilds had spend so much effort in trying to to complete the Immoral Prince episode, and they felt their effort had been a little bit of a waste.

This information had been spread to the media. This was the result of someone spilling the beans to the media when the person gained the bracelet.

“What about the bracelet?”

This was the reason why nothing was happening.

This was the reason why the Stormhunters guild, Red bulls guild and the Hyra guild couldn't move in an aggressive manner with the great battle on the horizon.

“If someone wearing the bracelet guides the outcome of the great battle, wouldn't that look like that person is trying to take all the benefit to himself?”



This was the problem.

It was already decided who could participate in the Immoral Prince raid. Of course, those who earned the qualification felt as if they put in the work and effort into gaining it. However, from the perspective of the Users that hadn't even been given a chance to participate, they felt as if the situation was unfair.

At the very least, the Corrupt Count Raid had a queue. If the guild in front of the line failed, the next in line could take a crack at it. However, the Immoral Prince Raid didn't have such a system. If a challenger failed, the same pool of challengers will be allowed to re-attempt it. It wouldn't allow new Users to join. At the very least, this was the extent of the information revealed to them regarding the Raid.

Not all Users could participate on the stage of the great battle. What would happen if the Red Bulls, Stormhunters or the Hydra guild proceeded to carry out the Raid as a monopoly?

Of course, there was no rules preventing them from doing so. However, this wouldn't be looked at fondly by the court of public opinions.

The three guilds, who gained the bracelets, were incredibly popular in the court of public opinions. If one ordered the 30 great guilds in terms of popularity, these three guilds would be within the top 5. If their popularity was as like the Big Smiles guild, they would try something, but this wasn't the case for the three guilds.



On top of those facts, Red Bulls guild and the Stormhunters guild gained a great number of Secret Society's Tokens. This made it look as if these guilds had stolen the chance of participating in the Immoral Prince Raid from the normal Users.

Of course, Hahui couldn't immediately understand the implication of Hatch's explanation.

“What is wrong with monopolizing the great battle? They should have killed the Corrupt Count or finish the Main Scenario Quest if they wanted to participate.”

“This is the nature of humans. If one is at a drinking party and someone one barely knew boasted about his success, one would get a belly ache from jealousy. This is human nature. Have I answered the question to your satisfaction?”

Hahui looked at Hatch with an unsatisfied expression. In truth, she still didn't have a clear understanding of the current state of affair. Hatch ignored her as he started his movie again.

At that moment...

– There is an emergency.

This time someone who was much scarier than the Princess had interrupted Hatch from watching his movie. It was the fearsome Queen.



‘Uh-whew. I just fought off a wildcat, and now a tiger is going to attack me.’

Hatch gave up on watching his movie as he licked his lips.



## Chapter 121 – Bad Ending? (2)

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5.

– Another castle fell. What number is that one?

– I don't care. It is already in ruins. No matter what we do there isn't an answer. This great battle is a bug!

– I feel the same way. The great battle is a completely trash of a quest. The difficulty is too high!

It was the 10 days after the great battle had started.

Everyone thought the great battle would be a festival, but it had been a complete disaster from the start. This situation was akin to a drunk host showing up at a much anticipated party. Moreover, as the host was carrying out his duties, he threw up. This was that level of a disaster.

Every one of the battles fought by the Users had resulted in a defeat. The results were so sorry that it was hard to call it a war between the Users and the Corrupted army. The Users were losing in a very overwhelming fashion.

Of course, a stumble may prevent a fall. In a war, victories and defeats were inevitable. However, if one saw the the progress of the battles live, one wouldn't dare utter such a proverb.



– This isn't about the high difficulty. The Users are just dumb. Shouldn't the blame for the losses be more on the Users?

– I feel the same way. I can overlook the fact that they aren't in sync. However, they are fighting with allies when the enemies are right in front of them. Their actions doesn't make any sense. This is quite a mess.

This was how underwhelming the sight of the Users fighting against the Corrupted army was. It was well below expectation. No, this was beyond being below expectation. It almost defied common sense.

– Mess? Maybe you should try fighting them yourself! Do you really think you'll do any better?

– You bastards don't even know how to play this game. Why don't you guys come over and participate?

– It is a mess! The heavyweight like the Hahoe Mask is putting up a proper fight!

– Aren't the Fighters guild doing well too? Whistling Pitbull is doing especially well. He still had the skills he displayed in his earlier fame. No, he looks to be much scarier than before.

– There is a team made by Users, and aren't they doing well? Their name is Kiyo or whatever. In truth, we are in this predicament, because of the regular Users. Those who were good



at this game are continuing to excel in this game.

Of course, not everyone was failing in the great battle.

Heroes always appeared in the times of turbulence. After the initial confusion, the turbulence allowed Users to distinguish themselves. Some Users were shining brighter than ever.

– Anyways, Hahoe Mask is the best.

– I'll accept that.

Amongst the bright stars, the star called the Hahoe Mask shone the brightest.

– Even as the castle was falling, he was able to taken down several hundred monsters before he escaped. At the very least, everyone should show that level of spirit.

– If there were 10 Hahoe Masks, there's no way a castle would fall.

Hahoe Mask's performance was so bright that it was hard to put it into words.

Moreover, his actions were always a bit more dramatic. He wasn't like the undisciplined mob fighting outside of the castle. He started fighting the moment when the monsters entered the castle.



If one fought to the end, it makes one look noble. There was an element of nobleness in the Hahoe Mask's battles.

- Why does the Hahoe Mask never fight outside? Is he scheming something?

Of course, a portion of the viewers was suspicious as to why the Hahoe Mask hadn't fought a single battle outside of the castle.

- If it were you, do you really want to fight with such a retarded group of Users?

- If the Hahoe Mask fights outside of the castle, the Users would probably think his Skeletons are monsters. They'll probably attack his Skeletons.

- Don't even mention the Hahoe Mask's name with those retarded group.

However, the suspicion failed to develop into a conspiracy.

In the process of all this, Hahoe Mask's worth was increasing steeply. Hahoe Mask's youtube page had reached a plateau not too long ago. However, the subscribers and the views on previously uploaded videos started to rise again.

The great battle was a bigger issue than most had thought it



would be, and the media was in a frenzy.

“We have to get an interview with the Hahoe Mask no matter what! Get him even if we have to plaster the request all over the newspapers!”

“If you can’t contact him, go into Warlord to get an interview! Hurry up!”

“We are the Warlord’s top webzine. We’ve been chasing after an interview with the Hahoe Mask when the media wasn’t even interested in him. I won’t let them steal the interview from me. I won’t stand for it. Use all of your personal connections. Get me that interview. If you can’t get an interview, you guys are going to get it from me.

It happened around that time.

Hahoe Mask’s popularity was reaching an all-time high. The media was getting ready to duke it out with each other to get ahold of the Hahoe Mask.

– Uh? What the hell is this?

“Uh? It seems the Hahoe Mask Interview isn’t the important news right now.”

The interest in the Hahoe Mask disappeared as if it was a mirage. There was another news that pushed the Hahoe Mask into the



backburner.

6.

[Hyrkan]

– Level : 165

– Title : 132

– Stats : Strength(1885)/Stamina(929)/Intelligence(1121)/Magic Power(1355)

‘The bonus EXP from the great battle is awesome. I’m leveling up quickly.’

As soon as he leveled up, he applied his points to his Stats. Hyrkan quickly closed his Stat Window, and he turned his head. When he turned his head, Hyrkan’s eyes took in the miserable sight of the fallen Misandra’s castle

‘Tsk.’

Hyrkan had a lot of memories regarding the Misandra’s castle. This sight made him feel saddened and frustrated. This sight discomforted him more so than any sight he had seen recently.

‘I’m finally at this point.....’



However, Hyrkan didn't have the luxury to sentimentalize over his memories.

'This next part will be dangerous for the Users, who didn't participate in the great battle.'

The advance of the Corrupted army was much faster than he had expected.

This was the reason why the User would make the rational choice.

The Users won't be enticed by the chance to gain Items and a quick level up. The Users will start to realize this great battle was unlike anything they encountered in terms of difficulty. The Users would become hesitant in participating in the great war.

The Users, who wanted to fight in earnest, will try to find battlefields where their victories were assured. This would lead the Users to flock towards the Underfoot guilds like the Fighters guild.

On the other hand, those who didn't want to fight would go to locations where defeat had already happened or they'll avoid locations being organized by groups like the Underfoot guilds.

This would lead to the gap between the rich and the poor getting bigger in terms of fighting power. The Corrupted army would attack the locations where the fighting power was poor.



‘If the castles where the low level Users get taken down... Shit. I have no idea how everything will turn out.’

The Corrupted army will start heading towards locations with Users under level 100. These locations were now in the sight of the Corrupted army. They had already attacked the Misandra’s Castle, which was a location meant for level 80 to level 100. Misandra’s castle was the Maginot Line, and the Maginot Line had been broken.

‘This is getting dangerous.’

Hyrkan had never thought such a situation would come to pass, and it was impossible to come up with a good plan on the spot.

‘What the hell are the 30 great guilds doing? They profited from everything they could get their hands on, yet they are acting like this! They should spit back out everything they pocketed!’

The only way to manage this situation was for the 30 great guilds to step in. This was the only solution in Hyrkan’s opinion.

The 30 great guilds had massive amount of forces, and they could use their live channels to mobilize the Users. Their standing and brand amongst the Users allowed them to be able to unite the User base. This was the reason why the 30 great guilds were scary. They had a reserve of power they could tap. The 30 great guilds were able to mobilize the Users.



Before he came to the past, Hyrkan had experienced it in his bones when those bastards tapped into the reserve.

‘They probably expressed their stance they’ll take in this situation. Since the situation is devolving like this, they can’t choose to be silent. These bastards are all greedy, so there is no way they’ll bypass this bait. I’m sure...’

Hyrkan looked around his surrounding once again. The Misandra’s castle was a mess, but there weren’t any monsters near him that would cause him trouble. Hyrkan quickly searched the internet.

‘Huh? What the hell is this?’

Fortunately, Hyrkan didn’t have to search long to find what he wanted to know.

7.

Che-sulyun was soaking inside her bathtub. The bathtub was filled with bubbles, yet her collarbone was visible. Her appearance was very bewitching. There was a saying that said one’s daily life was like picture in a magazine. This saying was apt.

Her hand was poking out of the bubbles, and her hand was holding onto her slim and half-translucent smart phone. The steam and bubble from bath didn’t allow the phone to show a clear picture, but it wasn’t that big of a deal. Che-sulyun was able to



check what she wanted to know.

She was reading an article.

[The V&V guild, Rangers guild, and 8 other guilds put out a joint statement stating they won't participate in the great battle!]

[This is from the V&V and Rangers guild's statement. 'The great battle was a stage provided for all Users to be able to participate. If the 30 great guilds joined the festival, we'll be ruining the festival for the Users.']

[Will the great battle be a festival for the underdogs?]

Che-sulyun had an annoyed expression as she read the article. She let go of the smart phone, and it dropped to the bottom of the tub. As if Che-sulyun's body had slipped, she sank deeper into the tub. Her collarbones had been visible before, but only her head was visible now.

'Fucking hell.'

Her figure was that of a goddess, yet her thoughts was very far from matching her appearance. All kinds of cuss words were floating around inside her head.

'Are those bastards scheming to fuck us over?'



A total of 9 guilds from the 30 great guilds announced that they won't be participating in the great battle. This included the V&V guild.

The reception to the statement was very good.

– Wow! They came to a really big decision.

– Yes. They are the 30 great guilds. They should act magnanimous like this. The Main Scenario Quest can be carried out by everyone. If the 30 great guilds monopolize it, wouldn't that be too unreasonable. I'm being honest here.

– However, look at what is happening. Shouldn't the 30 great guilds step forward? I don't think the Users can pull this off.

– If we fail, we fail. It isn't as if they'll shut down the game. The important part is that the 30 great guilds won't decide our fate. The result will be created by the Users..

There was a flow of opinions at the bottom of the article. Even though public opinions shouldn't be gauged by the comments below an article, positive responses were much more numerous than the negative responses.

'Crazy bastards. I can't believe there are people who believe in their bullshit.'

However, Che-sulyun knew the statement put out by the 9 guilds



weren't words that rose out from the bottom of their hearts. If they really cared about the enjoyment the normal Users feel, they wouldn't have put out a joint statement.

They were people who were incapable of doing such acts. They were doing this for the benefit of the Users? The 30 great guilds were a gathering of people, who would do anything for their own profits. As one of the Guild masters of the 30 great guilds, Chesulyun knew her thoughts weren't wrong. She was sure of it.

This meant the 9 guilds had put out this joint statement, because they judged this course of action would lead to a profit for them.

'I'm sure of it. If they are destined to become the maid of honor, they would rather spoil the whole thing.'

Profit didn't always have to involve gaining a material good. If they could block someone else from gaining a profit, at times that could be a profit in itself.

This was the case right now. The purpose behind the actions of 9 guilds were simple. They hadn't been able to receive the qualification to participate in the Immoral Prince Raid. There were 3 guilds, who had gained this qualification, and they had maneuvered it so that the 3 guilds wouldn't be able to also monopolize the great battle.

'In the end, it happened as the Helper said it would.'



Che-sulyun had known what the 9 guilds would do at a slightly earlier time..

Several guilds were getting ready to send out an announcement of non-participation....

The Helpers were called when the 30 great guilds needed assistance. These Helpers were from the Hands guild, and they were the one who had informed her of this news.

‘.....Helper. Those bastards are dangerous.’

She had found out about this news a little bit sooner than everyone. Of course, this didn’t mean she had a solution to her problem.

At that moment, Che-sulyun looked at the Hands guild in an unfavorable manner even though they had given her an important piece of news.

‘There is no way they gave me the information with good intent. Are they planning on pitting us against each other?’

Everything about this made her suspicious. It got on her nerves, and she became annoyed. The good will gesture by the Hands guild just raised Che-sulyun’s suspicion.

In the end, Che-sulyun massaged her temples with her hands. Everything about this business was going to cause her a headache.



It was inevitable.

‘I can’t let go of the great battle like this... However, we can’t move right now.’

There was a crisis, yet the Stormhunters didn’t have the right to fix the problem. Someone else would have to solve the problem for them. A scenario that Che-sulyun detested the most was unfolding in front of her.

‘I need a justification. I need a justification that’ll allow for one of the 30 great guilds to be able to step forward.....’

Ahn-jaehyun was busily sorting through the articles on the internet. He was busily gathering information, and the LCD display of the Tablet PC was smudged with his fingerprints. Ahn-jaehyun raised the coffee cup that was placed next to him. The coffee cup was lukewarm, but Ahn-jaehyun’s hands was shaking. It shook as if his hand was weak.

‘This is driving me nuts.’

8.

Ahn-jaehyun was nervous.

Ahn-jaehyun was human. Of course, he got nervous. He had done



many task in Warlord where he had felt nervous. The nervousness he felt was indescribable when he fought against the Boss monsters. When he logged off after finishing the raid, there were times when he had goose bumps all over his body when he took off his V-Gear.

However, the nervousness he was feeling right now was a different type of nervousness.

‘If things head down this path..... I’m fucked.’

Nine guilds announced that their guilds wouldn’t participate in the great battle!

Ahn-jaehyun didn’t recall this happening before. Before Ahn-jaehyun returned to the past, the 30 great guild had all joined the great battle, and they fought alongside each other in a competitive manner.

Of course, Ahn-jaehyun had created big commotion. The future before he had returned to the past would be different from the future he was forging right now. A tornado on the other side of earth could be influenced by the flapping of the wings of a butterfly. Ahn-jaehyun’s activities wasn’t akin to a butterfly flapping its wings. His level of activity was like poking a beehive with a stick.

Change was inevitable.



However, the current change was very dangerous for Ahn-jaehyun.

‘If things head down this way, the Quest Routes will change.’

Everything in Warlord was controlled by the AI. This was the case for the Main Scenario Quests.

For example, when the Users progressed in the game, the AI used the User’s level to calculate the difficulty of the Main Scenario Quest.

Unlike his worries from before, he didn’t think the AI would allow the Corrupted Army to be able to conquer all the castles. Or else it would result in the Immoral Prince rising to the throne. He didn’t think the game would send out a message saying, ‘Thank you for using Warlord until now.’

However, this might change the third Main Scenario Quest that starts after the Immoral Prince episode. The Quest Contents and Quest Routes for the Ruined Kingdom Episode would be completely changed from what Ahn-jaehyun remembered.

‘I can’t let that happen.’

If that happened, Ahn-jaehyun wouldn’t be able to have an active role in the Ruined Kingdom episode.

Whether he had an active role or not wasn’t the problem. If the



Immoral Prince episode was where Ahn-jaehyun caught up with the frontrunners, the Ruined Kingdom episode was the stage where he planned on leapfrogging the frontrunners. If he had to give up that stage, it would basically mean he would be giving up on the reason why he was playing Warlord.

In the end, Ahn-jaehyun didn't have a choice.

‘I have to use whatever means necessary to bring victory to the Users in the great battle.’

Ultimately, the great battle couldn't end with the Users losing.

‘If things play out this way, the game would be fine. However, my life would meet a bad ending.’

He had to use whatever means possible to drag the Users to victory. However, it was absurd to expect victory in the great battle just by relying on the Users.

In the end, there was only one method he could use.

‘.....this reminds of the time when I had to hard carry the kids at the bottom in Warlord.’

Hard Carry.

This was the only path that'll allow him to maintain his



livelihood.



## Chapter 122 – Bad Ending? (3)

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9.

When the V&V guild and the 8 other guilds announced their intention of sitting out the great battle, it didn't really cause much change to the overall flow of the great battle.

Of course, nothing was felt. The normal Users didn't feel much difference, because the announcement that the 9 guilds wouldn't participate was meaningless. This was like a politician earnestly spouting nonsense towards another politician.

The ones affected the most was the 30 great guilds.

‘What nonsense are these crazy bastards suddenly spouting?’

‘If they can't have it, then we can't have it either? Is that it?’

The rest of the 30 great guilds had planned on entering into the great battle at the right moment. Aside from the 9 guilds, the rest of the 30 guilds had to temporarily pause all the plans they had made.

Of course, this didn't mean the 9 guilds, who announced their non-participation, had a lot of influence or authority over the other guilds.



‘The one to step forward first will be hit the hardest.’

‘There is no need to be the first one to get bludgeoned.’

‘This might be better for us. The great battle is more difficult than expected. We should use this time to put our forces in order.’

In the end, everyone’s choice came down to calculating the cost.

‘If we look at what’s happening right now, the Corrupted army is dominating the battlefield. Eventually, they’ll need us.’

‘We can still work at the individual level. We just have to keep our guild’s name out of the spotlight.’

The ones, who were most affected aside from the 30 great guilds, was the Underfoot guilds.

While the 30 great guilds were punching figures into their calculators, the Underfoot guilds were aggressively participating in the great battle.

However, their participation couldn’t change the tide of the battle. Still, there had only been consecutive losses before, but now there were increasing number of victories.

This was especially true for the Fighters guild. Whistling Pitbull’s stellar performance was dazzling.



– Did the Fighters guild win again?

– He did it! He did it! Pitbull did it!

– Pitbull made a breach as he put his life on the line. The Users were sheeps without a shepherd, but now they have someone to flock towards. Someone really has to take the lead.

In truth, the Fighters guild more than likely would have lost their first foray into the great battle. They were using methods that had failed before. Their line of Tankers hadn't performed up to par, and the command structure had not been solidified. The mages rained down magic indiscriminately as they damaged allies and enemies equally.

In the end, everyone thought this was a wasted effort... The Users were getting ready to bail out quickly.

This was when Whistling Pitbull marshaled his comrades, and they charged forward.

“Break through! Burrow in as deep as you can! The side that can break through the other's battle line wins!”

Whistling Pitbull was going to be surrounded by monsters, but he didn't show a single ounce of fear. Whistling Pitbull unhesitatingly charged forward, and this sight changed the heart of some Users.



“All right. Let’s try at least once. It isn’t as if we can runaway forever.”

“If I wanted to run away all the time in a paid game, I would be playing Pacman.”

“Follow Whistling Pitbull in! We’ll live if we stick together!”

The Users that had been about to run away changed their minds. They ran back into the battlefield, and they fought with Whistling Pitbull as they formed a wedge. Everything was resolved rapidly afterwards. The Corrupted army was broken in half, and the Corrupted army broke up further to form smaller groups. The Users defeated them one by one. Most of the Users weren’t talented at fighting a large group like the Corrupted army, but they had a lot of experience in taking down small number of monsters.

The Fighters guild had broken the streak of losses, and they were somewhat able to direct the Users.

However, this method couldn’t be replicated by others, and it wasn’t an answer that would change the tide of the battle.

They needed a strategy instead of directions. They needed a tactic where anyone could copy it, and the result had to be certain. They needed a method where the effect could be seen immediately!

A User appeared to propose such a method.



“One of the special characteristics of the Corrupted army is the Siege mode where their vision narrows. If put in simpler terms, they won’t stop marching even if the comrade next to them is killed. This is why it is very easy to hunt the monsters on the periphery while they are moving. This is what knowledgeable people call Gnawing.”

In the footage, there was a man wearing a red Hahoe Mask standing in front of a castle. He was pointing at the Corrupted Army, while he earnestly gave an explanation.

On another video, the Corrupted army had broken through the Castle gate. As if this wasn’t enough, the Corrupted army broke down the castle wall, and they marched past the rubble.

“The fact that the castle gate and castle wall had fallen doesn’t have to signal the end of a battle.”

In this video, the man wearing a red Hahoe Mask was giving an explanation again.

“Actually, this is the time to attack. When a castle gate is breached or a castle wall falls, there is something that will always happen! This congestion of traffic always happens! A small number of Tankers can buy time. At the same time, AOE magic can be used on the monsters stuck in the bottleneck. The effect would be beyond description. If you can maintain this line, the defense of the castle is possible.”



The footage switched to the sight of numerous buildings within the castle being destroyed.

“The buildings are incredible obstacles for the monsters. There is no reason why you shouldn’t use the obstacles to your advantage. The street fights are the last battle before the castle is lost, but it is also the battle where the advantage is overwhelmingly in the User’s favor. Don’t panic, because it is a street fight. Enjoy it. This will be the chance to participate in the most easiest hunts, so don’t run away.”

It was a video regarding tactics.

The Hahoe Mask unhesitatingly put out videos where he showed tactics on how to defeat the Corrupted army.

The Users were brooding from the fact that they kept losing in the great battle. The video was like sweet water to the Users, who had suffered.

– I acknowledge this is a very good tip!

– It is as the Hahoe Mask said. You have to approach the Corrupted army laterally instead of a head-to-head contest. The battle becomes very easy. The Gnawing method is really sweet!

– He uploaded a jar of honey instead of videos. Thank you for the treat.



Of course, not everyone looked favourably on the Hahoe Mask's actions.

– Why did you reveal this? Take down the vids.

– Ah. Every time I'm trying to harvest some honey, bastards like you who are crazy about views mess everything up. Take down the vids!

– Hahoe Mask. Unless you want to cry from being PKed, pull the videos.

There were Users, who had been making a killing using the know-how dropped by Hyrkan. From their perspective, it was as if Hyrkan had broken the jar of honey they had been consuming. Of course, they didn't look favourably at Hyrkan's release of information.

However, it was the same for Hyrkan.

‘Shit. Do you think I'm doing this, because I like it?’

Hyrkan had been the one drinking the most from the honey pot he had revealed. Hyrkan had planned on using the methods he had revealed to earn the Great Battle's Hero title and other rewards. In truth, he had been taking full advantage of it until now.



However, the situation had changed.

The Users had to win the great battle. The result of the great battle was incredibly important to him. From Hyrkan's perspective, he had no choice.

‘I have to spread a lot of bait like this to reignite the interest of the regular Users.’

The string of defeats had caused a lot of disappointments, and a lot of Users had turned away from participating in the great battle. He needed to provide candies to turn them around.

Moreover, this wasn't the end. There was a limit on how many he can lure back with sweets. While the gaze of the Users were back on the stage of the great battle, he had to make their bodies burn with fighting spirit. He had to make their body itch from the need to participate in the great battle.

This meant his most difficult task was yet to be accomplished.

‘I'm working like a dog, yet what if the Ruined Kingdom Quest Route is different from what I know from before... If so, I'll find a way to blow up Tobosoft's server.’

11.

Shezga castle.



It was an adequate distance away from Misandra's castle. Like the Misandra's Castle, the Shezga castle was where level 80 to level 100 Users stayed.

However, the Shezga castle's Subjugation Association was surrounded by a lot of users, who had already went through their 1st Advancement.

There were almost 1000 Users of varying classes present.

Normally, two to three thousand Users participated in great battles at castles, so this was a relatively low turn out. Of course, the expectation for victory at the Shezga castle was inevitably low.

This was when Hyrkan appeared in front of them. Unlike yesterday, he was wearing his red Hahoe Mask, and his appearance created a sensation.

“Uh? It's the Hahoe mask!”

“Thank you for the videos!”

“I'll take advantage of the tips you us.”

Accompanying Hyrkan's appearance, a great number of Users sent their goodwill towards him. Hyrkan left behind the crowd, and he entered the Subjugation Association. Unlike outside of the



Subjugation Association building, there weren't that many people inside the building.

There were 12 Users.

These Users had been nominated, and they were given command of the forces that would be fighting in the great battle. They were given the title of Centurions.

When the Users kept losing, they realized they needed a command structure at the very least. They decided to gather in a group of 100 Users, and each group decided to nominate a group leader. Of course, this wasn't a prestigious seat. They were given command, but they were something akin to a leader of a college group project.

They weren't happy with the appearance of Hyrkan.

'Why is the Hahoe Mask here?'

'He always soloed everything up until now. There is no reason why he should show up here.'

They all were in agreement that the appearance of Hyrkan would help their beleaguered force, but Hyrkan had never operated with a group before. He was strictly an outsider.

This meant he had a purpose in coming here.



When Hyrkan entered the room, he immediately walked towards the Centurions.

There was a distance of about 15 meters between them and the door. About a dozen steps were taken by Hyrkan, and the sound of his steps pressed down hard on the slightly disordered atmosphere within the Subjugation Association. When he came to a stop, there was silence, and everyone stared at Hyrkan's mouth.

He opened his mouth.

"I want to command this great battle. Do you mind handing the operational authority to me?"

12.

"We greatly admire the Hahoe Mask's exploits. If you ask for the operational authority, of course, we will give it to you."

They gave their answer.

"Did you expect to hear some bullshit answer along that line? I hope not"

It was an unequivocal rejection.

At the same time, there was a vehement response to Hyrkan's



request.

“You suddenly appeared here, and you are asking for the operational authority? Why should we give that to you?”

“If an outsiders saw this, they’ll think we are your underlings by the way you treat us. However, we are utter strangers.”

This was to be expected.

The Hahoe Mask’s fame was incredible. Of course, one’s eyes would be blinded when staring at his fame, which was brilliant. Even though they were drunk on his fame, this didn’t mean Hyrkan had a right to treat them as his servants.

The Centurions gathered here were all pretty high level, and they had a plethora of battle experience under them. They couldn’t play the game as well as Hyrkan, but their passion and interest for this game weren’t any less than Hyrkan.

“You can’t give it to me?”

“If you immediately go outside and you are able to get 66% of the participating Users to sign a written consent, then we’ll give you the operational authority to you.”

Hyrkan snorted at his words. They were asking for a written consent. It was possible in real life, but it was something impossible to do in Warlord.



“Let’s make this simple. How about we decide this through PVP?”

Hyrkan gave a counter proposal. It was more of a provocation than a proposal.

“Why would we agree to such a crazy proposal? There are plenty of reasons on Youtube that says we shouldn’t fight the Hahoe Mask.”

However, no one fell for his provocation. It wasn’t about falling for it or not. This was normal in Warlord. Most of the Users in Warlord solved disagreements through words. It was rare to see a disagreement be solved through PVP or PK.

“If you insist on fighting your way, this will turn out like the battle at Misandra’s castle. I have a decent plan in mind.”

“You don’t know what we want. We are going to kill a decent amount of monsters then we’ll escape. We didn’t come here to win.”

Someone stood up from his seat, and he slowly walked to stand in front of Hyrkan. At his appearance, everyone shut their mouths. It seemed this person had a strong voice within the group of Centurions.

Hyrkan also recognized him when he checked his face. He unconsciously pursed his lips as if he was about to whistle.



‘Big K? The Submariner is here?’

Big K.

Currently, he was level 175, and he was a magician that had gone through his 1st Advancement to become a Magus Magnus.

His nickname was the Submariner. He used to be a baseball player, and he used his underhand pitching form to throw his magic.

His method of delivery was unexpectedly quite effective. A great number of monsters had a high amount of defense against attacks coming from the front or the top. However, they were relatively vulnerable to an attack that exploded from the bottom.

Since he was a former baseball player, the accuracy of his magic couldn’t even be compared to the normal Users.

Moreover, he was affiliated with the Red Bulls.

He had a pretty good gaming career, and there were no Underfoot guild present here. Of course, he was qualified to become a leader of such an undisciplined group of Users.

“We don’t have to speak in length about this. I’ll just lay out the main points.”



Big K confidently stood in front of Hyrkan, and he spoke in a sharp manner towards Hyrkan.

“We don’t care about winning this fight. We don’t have the ability to bring this about. We want to catch a decent amount of monsters before we slip away. We don’t care if the Shezga castle falls or not. That is none of our business.”

Big K’s words spelled out the group’s intentions in no uncertain terms.

Those who wanted to win the great battle and successfully defend the castles were with Underfoot guilds already, since they had proven they could win. Moreover, the locations with the Underfoot guilds had Users ranging in number from 3 to 5 thousand. They were overflowing with fighting power, and their chances of defending the castles were quite high.

At the same time, the monster hunts were very competitive in those locations. There was a sense of achievement in winning, but one couldn’t get a sufficient amount of EXP from those battles.

On the other hand, the Users that had gathered in number at the Shezga castle was at a location where the downfall of the castle was almost a certainty. However, there was no way there will be a shortage of monsters here.

Hyrkan knew this truth better than anyone. This was the reason why Hyrkan always went to stages where the odds were stacked.



If seen that way, Hyrkan was like an icon for defeat. Hyrkan had never moved the needle towards victory in the battles he participated in.

“So you guys are paying a lot of money to play like hyenas, who clamor over rotten meat?”

At that moment, Hyrkan tried another provocation.

Big K furrowed his eyebrows. In truth, Big K and the Centurions had been considerate to Hyrkan. In the first place, Hyrkan didn't have the authority to come in here and be so overbearing. If it was any other User, they would have chased him out. They were giving an explanation, because he was the Hahoe Mask.

However, there was a limit to anything.

“Hahoe Mask. Aren't you in the same boat as...”

“The plan is simple. You guys just fight like you had planned before. While you guys are engaged, I'll attack the Corrupted army from the rear.”

“From the rear?”

“What the hell is he talking about?”



Some of the Centurions reflexively protested to Hyrkan's plan. However, Hyrkan didn't give a reply to their questions.

"I planned on enlisting your help.... However, I don't need it anymore. By the look of you guys, you guys won't be of much help to me."

Hyrkan just continued with what he had to say.

"Just don't interfere with my work. Since you saw the strategy videos, I hope you can last long enough."

He turned his back to them.

A desolate feeling descended, and a person standing at the very edge of this desolate atmosphere yelled out his words.

"Are you sure the Hahoe Mask isn't an 8th grader?"

"The Hahoe Mask said that?"

– Yes.

"What happened?"

– The Centurions came to an agreement. We decided to take on a wait and see approach. Anyways, it isn't as if we can do anything



about it. Instead, I had to chase him down to give him the address to the voice talk channel being used by the Centurions.

Chev had an incredulous expression on his face when he heard Big K's report. Of course, this was a sound-only communication, so it was impossible for Chev to express what he was feeling through his facial expression.

“Honestly, I’m dumbfounded.”

Chev used his words to describe what he was feeling.

– Yes.

“Isn’t this the first time the Hahoe Mask has stepped forward for a fight? Doesn’t that mean there is a chance for victory there?”

He was dumbfounded, but at the same time, he had questions. If one considered what the Hahoe Mask achieved up until now, this was worth paying attention to.

– He called it Eating the Tail.

“Eating the Tail?”

– He said he’ll carry out the Gnawing strategy from the rear of the Corrupted army.



The instant he heard those words Chev could picture what Hyrkan was talking about. He drew out the strategy, Eating the Tail, inside his mind.

When he did, Chev's face once again hardened.

‘So that kind of maneuver can be used here.’

When the Corrupted army went into Siege mode, their vision narrowed. The knowledgeable Users were already aware of this fact, and most of the Users in the great battle found out about it when Hyrkan revealed it on his youtube video.

One could use this fact to laterally attack the Corrupted army. The Gnawing strategy was popular right now.

Once the Corrupted army moved past the Siege mode, the limited vision would move from the sides to the rear.

This new strategy would be effective.

Moreover, the Corrupted army never retreated. The risk of attacking from the rear might actually be less than the risk of attacking from the sides.

Of course, this strategy hadn't been verified yet. The result of Hahoe Mask's battle would bear out if his strategy worked or not.



‘Why?’

Chev once again went over the Hahoe Mask’s recent activities.

The Hahoe Mask worked hard by himself to reap all the benefits by himself. However, Hahoe Mask’s recent pattern of activity had gone through a significant change. He was revealing all the know hows he had been using in the great battle. Moreover, he had come up with a new strategy, and he was about to test it out by himself.

‘Is he planning on becoming a hero?’

Chev immediately imagined what would happen if he willed the Shezga castle battle to a victory.

If one won a battle that was expected to be won, one couldn’t become a hero.

A hero was someone, who snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.

If the Hahoe Mask could become a hero, the rights he would command would become very high.

“Good job, Big K.”

– It was nothing.



“Then let’s end the call. I have to make an urgent call right now.”

– Understood.

After the call ended, Chev immediately attempted to call someone. After a brief ringtone, a voice was heard from the other side.

– Speak.

“We’ll have to bribe the Hahoe Mask.”



# Chapter 123 – Power Of Wealth (1)

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1.

There used to be a saying in the great battle that said the tail had the best flavor. If the best tasting part of a fish was its head, the best tasting part of the great battle was the tail.

When the Corrupted army went into Siege mode, the Corrupted army became very reckless. They charged forward no matter what. Even if outside interference arrived, the monsters that were directly affected would be the only ones to react. The rest of the monsters didn't stop their charge.

Even the monsters that had reacted returned to their charge as soon as their aggro was reset in a short order. If a Tanker succeeded in drawing aggro, the monster would start attacking, then suddenly it would just run past the Tanker to charge the castle.

This special characteristic was put in, so that the Users couldn't break up the Corrupted army using the Aggro system. However, every advantage also had its disadvantage. The Gnawing method was a strategy that turned the advantage of the Corrupted army into a disadvantage. One was able to approach the Corrupted army from the side, and the monsters were picked off one by one.

This was where the expression the tail has the best flavor originated. After the know how to the Gnawing method was revealed, all the Users started to pound the Corrupted army from



the side. In many cases, there were more Users dispatched to the side than the front. Naturally, the competition in Gnawing the Corrupted army became fierce.

At that moment, several Users had an idea.

‘Hey. Instead of the side, how about eating them from the rear?’

‘All right.’

There were no spots open from the sides. If one took position in the front, there was the danger of being run over by the Corrupt army.

Let’s attack the tail!

The result was a jackpot.

The biggest advantage of Eating the Tail was the fact that there was a very low probability of the Corrupted army coming to a stop and surrounding the Users. If one faced the Corrupted army head on, it didn’t matter if one could be surrounded. A simple lapse in concentration would result in one being trampled.

The Gnawing from the side had a lower chance of being surrounded compared to the front, but it wasn’t as if it didn’t happen.



However, it was impossible to be surrounded using the Eat the Tail method. It couldn't happen unless one throws one's body into the midst of the Corrupted army.

‘I’ve laid out all my cards now.’

In other words, Hyrkan had no more tips to give after the Eat the Tail method. He had given away the Congestion method, Street Battle strategy, Gnawing method and now the Eat the Tail method. There might be some very mysterious and marvelous method to attack the Corrupted army, but Hyrkan's brain couldn't come up with any.

Since he already revealed the Eat the Tail method, Hyrkan had to do something monumental.

‘I’ll finish this great battle using any means possible by myself.’

There would be nothing more monumental than winning this battle.

‘After I end this, I have to encourage the 30 great guilds to participate....’

When Hyrkan ruminated over his plan, Hyrkan suddenly started kicking at the ground like a crazy person.

“Ooh-ah-ah-ah!”



Even a bizarre sound escaped from Hyrkan's mouth. No matter who saw this they would think he had lost his mind.

‘Why do I have to spend so much money because of those 30 great guilds? Why do I have to do such bullshit...’

Of course, it was an understandable reaction to the situation.

If Hyrkan's plan ended in success, the ones who'll benefit would be the 30 great guilds. The goal of his plan was to push the 30 great guilds into participating in the great battle.

There was no other way to do this. The activities of the Underfoot guilds, and the know how revealed by Hyrkan made the situation a little bit better. However, they couldn't completely turn the tide of the war. Moreover, the defending of the castles wasn't the only task they had to accomplish. They had to take back the castles they had lost.

If Hyrkan had 30 bodies then it wouldn't be a problem. However, there was a limit on what he could do himself.

“Shit!”

Still, he couldn't help, but get mad.

Hyrkan had been busy abusing the ground, and an unlucky rock



got caught in one of his kicks. The large rock was as big as a fist of a grown man, and it flew high into the air. It flew in a large arc, and it impacted hard against the helmet worn by a monster in the rear of the Corrupted army.

The sudden impact of the rock made the monster look around its surrounding before it kept on charging with its comrades.

When Hyrkan saw this, he couldn't help laughing. Hyrkan turned his gaze on the Skeleton Warriors holding big sacks.

2.

[There's 1 hour 59 minutes 59 seconds before the Corrupted army arrives at the Shezga castle.]

When the announcement alerting the appearance of the Corrupted army was put up, the 1000 Users in the Shezga castle started to move busily.

“Let's move to our assigned districts!”

“Take all your Items and don't get confused on which district you are supposed to be in!”

The Centurions and the groups that were assigned to them moved towards the assigned districts. This was a tactic that had



been popularized recently in the great battle. The Users realized it was useless to create a battle line with all the Tankers standing side by side. It was better to create a group of 100, and these groups could defend an assigned region.

This made more sense since the Users here wasn't planning on defending the castle.

“Let's catch a lot of them today!”

“Don't over do it. We just need to gain some EXP. We just have to catch the monsters that come into the the castle.”

All the Users here had gathered to take advantage of the hunting ground that would give a good amount of EXP. That was no other reasons for being here.

While the groups were busily moving to their assigned sectors, Big K stood on top of the the castle wall. He was watching something far away instead of going to his sector. A fellow Red Bulls guild member named Yangchio saw Big K standing on top of the castle wall. He approached Big K as Yangchio asked him a question.

“What are you looking at? We have to move.”

“Hahoe Mask.”

Yangchio was surprised by Big K's sudden answer, so he followed



Big K's gaze.

“Where is the Hahoe Mask?”

However, he couldn't see anything at the location where Big K was staring at. No, there was something there. It was pretty far away, but a cloud of dust and birds were rising above the treetops.

The trees were being overturned by the advance of the Corrupted Army. The wild animals that had used the trees as their home were running away, and they were causing a chaotic scene.

Of course, the Hahoe Mask still couldn't be seen. Moreover, the distance was too far to see the Hahoe Mask with the naked eye.

“Where are you looking at? Where's the Hahoe Mask?”

Yangchio spoke in a sullen manner. He thought Big K had duped him.

However, Big K wasn't trying to deceive Yangchio at all. Big K couldn't see him, but he couldn't deduce where the Hahoe Mask was located at.

“Look at the rear.”

“Rear?”



“He is behind the advancing Corrupted army. The Hahoe Mask does not go back on his words. He’ll be where he said he’ll be.”

Yangchio clicked his tongue at Big K’s answer. He couldn’t understand Big K’s behavior. They didn’t have any reason to worry about the Hahoe Mask now. Wasn’t it more important to pay attention to the task at hand?

Big K understood the Yangchio’s reaction, but he didn’t refused to change the topic. He continued on speaking.

“What if the Hahoe Mask does what he said he would do? What would happen if he engineered a victory in this great battle?”

“Poo-hah-ha!”

Instead of an answer, Yangchio let out an explosive laugh. His laughter was a more sure answer than his words.

“You don’t have to worry about such a thing happening, Big K. The Hahoe Mask is a nutjob. The nutjob has nothing to do with us. Moreover, even if Hahoe Mask is amazing, what can he do by himself? Victory? That isn’t even funny. There is no way the Users gathered here could defend the castle.”

Yangchio patted Big K’s shoulder. It was a nonverbal signal asking Big K to stop speaking of such nonsense.

Big K closed his mouth after receiving the signal. However, he



continued to look towards a location beyond the Corrupted army.

‘Hahoe Mask’s plan was simple.’

The plan spoken by the Hahoe Mask wasn’t difficult to comprehend. While the Hahoe Mask focused on the tail of the Corrupted army, the rest of the Users gathered here would fight with the castle wall in front of them. Then a portion of their forces would attempt the Gnawing method. This was the entirety of the plan revealed by the Hahoe Mask.

The Corrupted army would become congested as it tried to squeeze through a small door. While this phenomenon was happening, the Users would surround the Corrupted army, and they would chip away at the horde.

‘The plan proposed by the Hahoe Mask can be done.’

It wouldn’t be too difficult. He didn’t know if it would result in victory, but he could carry out the plan. However, there was no good reason to follow the Hahoe Mask’s word right now.

No Users would follow the plan just because the Hahoe Mask came up with it.

Most of the Users would resent Hyrkan for ordering them around.

If the Hahoe Mask really wanted to do things his way, he need to



develop an aura that drew people in through his deeds. This aura was what allowed Fighters guild's Whistling Pitbull to be able to lead others into victory.

This part was what worried Big K about the Hahoe Mask.

There were many things said about the Hahoe Mask, but no one denied the Hahoe Mask had a great aura.

Was he willing to bet that the Hahoe Mask would be able to reveal such an aura here?

‘Should I really just ignore the Hahoe Mask? Is that the right answer? What if we can really defend the castle? Was following the Hahoe Mask the right answer?’

It happened when Big K was deep within his thoughts.

Kwahng!

The battle started as a sound of an explosion was heard from the rear of the Corrupted army.

3.

The Corrupted army had entered into its Siege mode. Hyrkan was tailing them, and Hyrkan saw a pretty awesome sight in front of him.



Various monsters were in full armor, and they were marching in line as they advanced. They looked dignified, and every time they took a step the ground shook. They unhesitatingly trampled any vegetation in their way as they left behind traces of their passage.

This was something that couldn't be seen anywhere else. It was a magnificent sight that could only be seen in the great battle.

He was going to do something to this magnificent sight. It almost felt like he was throwing muddy water at a famous painting.

However, he didn't hesitate as he threw the muddy water at the magnificent sight. He threw something that was akin to throwing a huge amount of muddy water.

Kwahng!

A Bone Explosive was thrown by Hyrkan, and a big explosion occurred when it impacted on the helm of a Corrupted Armor Troll. The power of the blast was considerable. It was strong enough to dent the Corrupted Armor Troll's helmet. On top of that, the fragments from the Bone Explosive splattered onto the surrounding monsters.

However, the only one displaying hostility towards Hyrkan was the one that had received the direct attack.

Koo-uh-uh!



It jumped out from the horde as it started charging after Hyrkan. Hyrkan didn't try to dodge its charge. Instead, he threw more Bone Explosives. He hadn't just thrown one.

Kwah-ahng, kwah-gwah, kwahng!

He threw a handful.

To be precise, he had thrown four Bone Explosives at once. The simultaneous explosion of the four explosives generated considerable amount of force. The Corrupted Armor Troll stopped in its track for a moment, and one could see several places on the armor where it had take significant damage. If this were normal times, he would have tried Armor Breaking first, then he would have used the Bone Explosives to do the damage dealing.

He could still use that method right now. It was still an efficient way to defeat a monster.

However, he had a method where he could destroy the armor much faster.

The problem was money!

If he used his Bone Explosives this way, he would never gain any profits. He wouldn't even have to worry about profits. Every monster he caught would put him in the negative.



‘Ooh ooh. My money.....’

Of course, this style of attack had a bigger impact on Hyrkan more so than the monster being attacked. He had already thrown five Bone Explosives, and it made Hyrkan shudder.

However, Hyrkan gritted his teeth as his body shuddered, and he threw another Bone Explosive.

‘I can’t take more than 2 minutes to catch one monster.’

He had to decrease the time it took to kill the monsters.

If Hyrkan did an Armor Breaking against the Corrupted Monster and he battled the Corrupted Monster with the Skeleton Warriors and Knights, it would take him about 3 to 5 minutes to take one down. It was an incredible feat. He was taking it down faster than what a 5 man party could do.

The problem arose when he did the math. At the very least, it would take him 300 minutes to catch 100 Corrupted Monsters. It’ll take over 5 hours.

He couldn’t fight like that. He didn’t have the time. Moreover, it was impossible for him to maintain his concentration for so long. In Hyrkan’s case, he would have to perform the Eat the Tail method to start off the war then he would have to fight in battle in earnest. Afterwards, he might also have to fight in the street battles too.



This was why Hyrkan was trying to lessen the time he spent here using money. He had brought a large amount of Bone Explosives. The two Skeletons had been carrying the bags, and it was filled with Bone Explosives.

He hadn't calculated the cost yet. If he knew the figure, Hyrkan felt like his heart would have crumbled.

However, this wasn't the end.

“Ughh.”

Hyrkan let out a moan as he flicked his finger. As if the Skeleton Warriors had been on standby, they ran in towards the Troll. Every one of the Skeleton Warriors held a hammer.

He'll damage the armor with the Bone Explosives, and the hammers would be used to destroy the armor!

Hyrkan had purchased these new Items to pull off this tactic. The amount he had spent wasn't small.

Ggah-ahng, ggah-ahng!

This method did the job in no uncertain terms. As soon as the combat started, the Skeleton Warriors tirelessly bashed their hammers against the Troll's armor. Unlike the Skeleton Warriors,



the club swung by the Troll didn't hit anything.

The Troll's armors were crushed in a horrible fashion, and at some point, the armor parts started falling to the ground one after another.

However, Hyrkan wasn't watching this sight anymore. Hyrkan was already chasing after the Corrupted army, which had traveled a fair distance away from him. When he closed in on them, he threw a Bone Explosive at a new target.

If he wanted to catch them quickly, he had to kill several at a time. However, he had to attack each individual monsters to draw their aggro. If put in terms Hyrkan could understand, it meant he had to spend more money.

Hyrkan bit his lip hard.

At the same time, Hyrkan squeezed his fist. Sparkling liquid started dripping from his clenched fist to the ground.

When the liquid started to pool, the ground started to shift, and an enormous wolf appeared. It was a striking looking wolf with four knife-like canines. It was a Blade Wolf.

It was a level 140 mid-sized monster. It was rated as being one of the strongest amongst the Boss Monsters with similar size and level. At the same time, it was a very expensive monster. He had used the gem from a monster of that caliber as a sacrifice for the



Clay Play.

However, the Wolf Golem that had appeared was worth its price. It didn't even bother with Armor Breaking. It immediately pounced on the Corrupted Armor Orc, and it bit off flesh and armor in a flash. The Corrupted Armor Orc counter-attacked, and it was able to wound the Wolf Golem. However, the Golem's wound was immediately patched up using Hyrkan's Magic Power.

Hyrkan didn't pay attention to the battle. Hyrkan once again threw a Bone Explosive towards the third target.

This time the Skeleton Knight stepped forward. At a glance, one could tell the Skeleton Knight was equipped with expensive defensive gears. When the Bone Armor was summoned, its body became several times larger. The Madness Helm was the finishing touch.

After receiving all the Buffs, the Skeleton Knight started to move in a frenzy.

It almost made one feel sorry for the Corrupted Lizardman, who was facing off against the Skeleton Knight.

Once again Hyrkan couldn't stay to see the battle.

Hyrkan reached to the big bag by his side, and he took out a Bone Explosive. He threw it towards the 4th target. During all of this, the Skeleton Warriors had finished their battle, and they had



arrived near the vicinity of Hyrkan. They waited for Hyrkan's attack order, and the appearance of a new prey.

Blitzkrieg!

Hyrkan was quickly reducing the number of monsters in the Corrupted Army with surprising speed.

At the same time...

“Ooh haha! Eat these money bombs!”

The threads holding together his sanity was slowly being eaten away.



## Chapter 124 – Power Of Wealth (2)

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4.

The high and mighty walls of the Shezga castle came into the view of the Corrupted army. They maintained a singular focus on their task.

It had been 100 minutes since the Corrupted army had entered into its Siege mode. If this pace was kept up, there would only be 20 minutes left until they arrived. The monsters of Corrupted army would use their weapons to knock roughly against the castle gate and walls.

On one hand, there was still a long distance between the Corrupted army and the castle walls. They were moving fast, but they weren't running. They were walking, so the distance they could cover in 20 minutes wasn't that large.

This was why the Corrupted army urged their feet to move faster. Their foot speed was slowly increasing. If they had been taking 10 steps, they had increased their pace to take 12 to 13 steps.

Koong,koong,koong,koong!

There was no obstacles that could stop them, and there was increased power behind their charge. The sound of the ground shaking was getting louder, and the force they were pushing forward with got stronger. They were like a living bulldozer. They were shoving everything out of their way. After they plowed up



everything in front of them, they trampled everything to finish the deed.

If this scene was seen from the front, it would be a terrifying sight. For example, this was like a person standing in the middle of a train track built to connect two cliffs. The train was coming towards the person standing on the track, and it was making a lot of noise.

Dizziness!

Moreover, this wasn't a normal dizziness. It was a dizziness that threatened to swallow the kaleidoscope of thoughts that was in one's head. This dizziness completely filled one's mind.

There were times when a tragedy close at hand might seem comedic from afar.

The Corrupted army was a symbol representing tragedy.

A person looking from afar would liken the army to this description right now.

It was like a wild animal running crazily as if its tail was on fire!

As the figure of speech implied, the Corrupted army's tail was on fire, and it wasn't a pretty sight.



The most eye catching part was the grisly sight of monster corpses strewn about behind the Corrupted army. The corpses hadn't been disassembled, and they hadn't melted yet. The irrefutable evidence of the grisly process of the killing was on full display.

The next eye-catching part was a group of monsters dressed in similar gears. They were devastating the members of the Corrupted army. These monsters all wore similar armors, and they looked as if they had some kind of a dress code. The difference in terms of power was apparent between the two groups. The difference in power made the horde that symbolized tragedy to look almost comedic.

‘Six Bone Explosives and 3 Skeleton Warriors are needed for the Corrupted Armor Orc.’

The one directing this comedy was Hyrkan.

The size of the bag containing his Bone Explosives had noticeably decreased in size. After he took out three Bone Explosive, he threw it towards a Corrupted Armor Orc. The Bone Explosives crumpled the Orc's armor. The dishevelled Orc put on a rage-filled expression as it turned to charge towards Hyrkan.

Hyrkan gave the signal to three Skeleton Warriors, who had just arrived after finishing their battle. The Skeleton Warriors had just recovered from a broken knee, ribs and shoulders. They followed their owner's orders as they ran in towards Orc.



Hyrkan didn't watch the battle.

This was the reason why he couldn't recall any memorable battle scenes from this protracted battle. The only scene he remembered was himself throwing the Bone Explosives. Basically, he remembered a variation of the same scene as if a camera was taking multiple shots at once.

Instead, Hyrkan remembered a number.

'118.'

It had been 10 minutes since the battle had started, and he had caught 118 Corrupted Monsters. There were over a thousand of them, and the the number was closer to being two thousand. The number of monsters he had killed was like a thorn in the Corrupted Army's side.

Hyrkan broke down the battle into numerical figures. He felt this approach left much to be desired.

'Corrupted Werewolf. Use 6 Bone Explosives, and dispatch the Skeleton Knight.'

He was like a finely tuned machine.

He honed in on a target, and he used just the right number of Bone Explosives to crush the armor. After he finished acquiring aggro and armor breaking, he dispatched the right amount of force



needed to take down the monster.

This type of battle gave off a little bit of a different feeling than the any of the battles from before.

Intelligent.

‘The cool time of the Curses has been reset. I should get ready.’

He calculated the cool time of all his skills, and he put the right number of underlings in the right locations. The way he was conducting the battle was possible not because of his experience or intuition.

Moreover, it wasn't as if Hyrkan stood back as he commanded.

He stepped in when there was an emergency. If he determined his underling was about to be killed, he didn't hesitate to step forward.

This was the exact situation he was in. A Kobold has swung its hammer, and it had destroyed the knee of a Skeleton Warrior. The Skeleton Warrior fell in place, and the Kobold's hammer was about to fall like thunder on top its head. Hyrkan was already next to the Kobold as he used Body Slam with his sword placed right in front of him. He sent the Kobold flying.

Kwah-jeek!



He had a powerful weapon called the Black Kobold King's Sword. For this battle, he looked the other way as he purchased the weapon for a slightly higher price than its usual market price. The weapon, which he had paid a hefty sum, pierced through the Kobold's armor and skin.

He carried the Skeleton Warrior on his back, since it hadn't recovered for its injury yet.

The magical energy consumed in repairing the Skeleton Warriors wasn't a problem. However, if a Skeleton Warrior was destroyed, there was a cool time before it could be re-summoned. This was why Hyrkan had stepped forward.

It was very hard to participate in a battle, and think at the same time.

Furthermore, the situation on the battlefield changed a lot when Hyrkan participated in the battle field. Every move he made required a new calculation, and Hyrkan was able to quickly carry out the calculation. Hyrkan would survey the battlefield, and he was able to finish his calculation based on this information.

It was an incredible feat.

Moreover, it was something very unusual.

So what made Hyrkan different from the normal Users?



Moreover, why did this difference allow him give an effort of 120%?

‘I have to get my money’s worth. No matter what...’

Of course, the answer was very simple.

5.

In life, a person’s voice was an incredibly important tool. On a brutal stage like a war, if one’s voice couldn’t reach other’s ears easily, it would lose its worth. This was why people used other tools in battle. They used tools like horns or drums that mimicked the rising heart rate of men to communicate.

However, there was a tool that was worth more than one’s voice in Warlord.

“What’s the current status of Team 8 and Team 9?”

– Team 9 is on standby.

– Team 8 is on standby.

Voice Talk.

Warlord allowed the use of this endlessly useful program. It was



able to transmit one's voice in the midst of the very loud and bone chilling sounds of battle. Its worth as a tool was highlighted in battle.

“It is up to the discretion of Team 9 and Team 8 to join the battle. Aside from Team 1 to 5, the rest of the teams will move after Team 8 and Team 9 moves.”

Big K spoke as he looked forward.

‘They are finally here.’

It would be false to say the Corrupted army was far away. One could now see the advancing corrupted army.

Big Kay was part of the team that'll defend the region in the front.

of course, this sector was the hardest to defend. It was a stage where everyone didn't want to be, and at the same time, it was the region that required the most skilled Users. Since this stage held such significance, Big K was put in charge of this stage. He'll also have the final say in what happened.

“Hoo-ooh.”

In truth, Big K didn't want to be in charge of this stage. If it wasn't for the orders from Red Bulls, he would have used the tips disseminated to everyone by the Hahoe Mask to hunt. He would



have been out there doing the Gnawing method.

This was one of the reasons why Big K let out a sigh with the battle in sight.

‘Jeez. What kind of a game...’

Red Bulls didn’t allow guild members to join the great battle as representatives of the guild. They were allowed to join as individuals.

The guilds were looking at the big picture. Several big factor were preventing them from participating in the great battle in earnest. However, none of the 30 great guilds had given up on the great battle. Naturally, they expected a time to come when they would have to enter into the fray in earnest. This was why the 30 great guilds were doing advanced work.

There were two tasks they were trying to accomplish.

Goodwill. The guild members had to unhesitatingly do the dirty work as individuals. This will naturally build the trust of the Users.

Experience. While they were doing the hard work, they would gain more experience compared to the Users, who only did the easy work. This was a given.

On top of it all, the two tasks were also a measuring stick for the



guilds. Every company had to choose people, who had the potential to move up in the corporate structure. One had to separate out the elite amongst the workers that had just entered. After separating out the elites, these Users had to mature and be tested on a special stage. This was such a task for Big K. There was no reason why he should feel bad about it. If his results were good, he would move into the 1.5 Raid team at the end of the great battle. This was where the flower of the Red Bulls guild was placed. He would be placed in a rank that would give him a lot of face.

Of course, he felt pressure. A test was a test. Currently, several dozen Users like Big K was spread across Warlord. Seeds were spread far and wide. The ones that grew the best would be place where there would be most light.

If he couldn't take root in the stage called the great battle, he'll be returned to the dirt. Even if he was able to germinate and sprout, he wouldn't be picked if his stem thin, his roots weren't deep, and his leaves were dry. He wouldn't be pick, and he would have to wait for the next opportunity.

He had to do well.

No, he had to do better than everyone else.

‘Hahoe Mask.’

This was why Big K was having a hard time forgetting about the Hahoe Mask. No matter how he thought about it, he felt as if the existence of the Hahoe Mask would give him a chance.



Of course, while Big K was thinking this through inside his head, the battle started. The battle couldn't be delayed.

6.

“Hold out!”

The Tankers linked shields to make a concave battle line, and the priests stood behind that line. The magicians were lined up behind the priests. The group leader, who directed the battle, was behind the line of magician. This was the Centurion.

They had created a crescent-shaped line, and the armored monsters with pitch black eyes swarmed against it.

Kwah-ahng, kwah-ahng, kwahng!

The monsters tirelessly banged against the shields, and the power of the monsters' weapons were incredible. The blunt weapons crushed the shields, and the sharp weapons ripped through the shields. The Tankers had placed their shield in front of them, and the shields were losing their luster as it turned unsightly.

Of course, there were few shields that still held its dignified appearance as it shone against the fierce attacks.



The Tankers next to the owners of the shields made comments towards them.

“The Albino Beetle Shield is amazing.”

“Unique Items are quite something.”

The owner of the shield spoke with a proud smile on his face.

“This is why people use all their money to gain this type of Items. Instead of buying three mediocre shields, it is better to just buy one good shield.”

“You whined when you bought that shield. You said you regretted buying that....”

These three Users proved they could joke around even in a tight battle.

– Casting complete!

While this was going on, the magicians started whispering into the Centurion’s ears that their casting was complete.

One, two, three..... When he counted to ten, the Centurion raised his voice.



“Ready the magic bombardment!”

The sound increased the nervousness felt by everyone.

The ones who were the most nervous were the Tankers. Explosions will be going off in front of their shield. The powerful magical spells would start to destroy the monsters, and the after effects would spread to the surrounding. This was worse than taking a fragments from a grenade. The monsters, who were attacking would trip, fall or be pushed back. The strength that emerged from this process would be enormous. Any living organism displayed its strongest power in its struggle to live.

‘There is no way I’ll make a Tanker ever again.’

‘I have to do all hard work. It is the best to be a healer.’

When the Tanker’s nervousness passed, the priests prepared themselves.

“Fire the magic!”

Ten magicians threw various magical spells as they synchronized with the Centurion’s signal. They threw it over the line as the magical spells fell on the head of the monsters.

The first spells to take effect was the electricity magic. Two lightning marbles fell on the head of the monsters, and the electricity was discharged.



Pah-ji-jeek, pah-ji-jeek!

Armor was useless against electric discharge. Some parts of the armors acted like lightning rods as it took in the electricity.

Koo-uh-uh!

The monsters let out a roar as they took in the electrical discharge.

As this attack was taking effect, two fire marbles fell on the floor.

Hwah-roo-roo!

Each fire marble created a sea of fire about 330 meters in size. Its immediate damage wasn't that high, but it damaged the monsters over time. It was the strongest Persistent spell available. It was the most useful magic when maintaining a face to face confrontation.

Ice was synonymous with magic in Warlord, and it wasn't missing from the party. One Ice marble fell to the floor.

Pah-jeek!

It broke against the floor.



After it broke open, the Ice Fog that was filling the marble started to spread to a wide area. The fog disappeared as fast as it had appeared. However, when the fog disappeared, it left behind completely frozen monsters. There were only ice statues left.

The ones to break the ice statues were the nearby monsters. The monsters didn't hesitate to trample over their comrades. The frozen monsters were broken completely like glass or they were broken in piecemeal. However, there were almost no traces left when the heavy footsteps of the monsters trampled over the broken pieces.

A mayhem ensued, and this mayhem was pounding against the Tankers. The Tankers yelled out with their shields in front of them.

“Endure!”

“Ooh-raht-cha-cha!”

“Someone sing me a song!”

Even now they were cracking jokes.

However, there was a place where jokes weren't forthcoming.



– Team 10 has fallen!

It was a one-sided communication given to Big K as a report. They weren't asking for help. They were just telling others that their work was done, and they'll be high tailing it out of there. It was a missive that expressed support to the rest of the teams left.

Big K didn't get angry at those words. It would be great if they could all enjoy the battle as they laughed. However, even if all the troops of the 30 great guilds were sent in, Users would still suffer Game Overs. This will make the Users drink alcohol for 48 hrs. Tragedy happened no matter what work you did in this world.

Moreover, one couldn't feel anger or relief at such news.

“Good job.”

– You did well Team 10.

– Please get ready for the next battle.

He decided they should stay to defend their region. It was the right answer to leave alone the location of the breach. If they split apart their forces to patch up the breach, a lot of Users will suffer Game Overs. They'll receive a long reflection period of 48 hours. This had been proven time and time again in other battles. The report card on this strategy was dismal. It would be stupid to follow the same failing formula again.



At that moment, Big K assessed their chance of winning.

‘It’s been 10 minutes since the battle started yet the Corrupted Army broke through one place.’

The pace wasn’t that great. The fact that they hadn’t been able to hold out for 10 minutes wasn’t the important part. The fact that they couldn’t last 10 minutes meant that they weren’t able to kill many monsters.

There were only 1000 Users gathered at the Shezga castle, and the defeat was already preordained before the battle even started. It was clear that they’ll have to do the street battles soon.

Basically, this was a long-drawn-out battle. There was the outside of the castle, castle gate and inside the castle. These were the three stages where battles would be fought. Of course, every monster one kills in the earlier stage meant it would be a boon in this protracted battle.

‘As expected, we can’t do this.’

They had taken down far less than expected. This was why the probability of victory was lowered in Big K’s head.

It happened at that moment...

– This is Team 11.



Team 11 contacted him.

‘Huh?’

Team 11 and Team 12 held slightly different roles than the other teams. These were the Users with styles that was was least useful in the great battle. It was a group made out of Strikers. Instead of exchanging blows, these teams were made out of Users adept at doing hit and run attacks.

“What is it Team 11?

These teams had been in charge of carrying out the Gnawing method.

If they weren’t careful, these were the teams that would suffer catastrophic accidents like Team 10. Since they were doing a hit and run, there was no way they would be annihilated. Of course, they were also the teams that spoke the least on Voice Talk. When someone who rarely speaks says something, there was more weight to their words.

Moreover, the content of the words also added to the weight of the words being spoken.

– The Hahoe Mask is active in the rear of the the Corrupted Army. What should we do?



At the Team 11 Centurion's words, it was as if a well full of frogs were croaking at the same time.

– Wow! The Hahoe Mask is really at the rear?

– I thought he left after throwing couple Bone Explosives. Was he perhaps been at the rear this whole time?

– Wow. The Hahoe Mask is really a crazy dude. Was he just on the tail? Or was he fighting the whole time?

Croak croak.

Voices were coming from every avenue, and it almost made Big K lose his mind. It didn't matter for others if people kept speaking. However, it was Big K's job to hear everyone out. He had to parse through even the meaningless words. There was nothing more annoying than to have a job where one has to listen to garbage.

“Quiet.”

In the end, Big K spoke a word.

– How many monsters did the Hahoe Mask.... Ah. I'm sorry.

When one person stepped up to act as an inquisitor, it extinguished the fire that had roiled the atmosphere.



Big K spoke again when the atmosphere had settled down.

“So how many did the Hahoe Mask take down?”

He had spoken in a manner that was akin to how an inquisitor spoke.

– Pffft.

A laughter leaked out of the Voice Talk. Since Big K didn't know the reason behind the laughter, he wasn't in a good mood. It was quite fortunate that the others couldn't see his expression. A small relief bloomed in his chest from the fact that this wasn't a video chat.

Fortunately, the Centurion of Team 11 was a man of few words, and he hadn't been carried along by the atmosphere of others. He answered in a calm fashion.

– The number I witnessed is 11. He is catching one per minute. It's been 110 minute since the Corrupted Army went into its Siege mode. If he had maintained this pace, at the very least, he would have caught over a hundred of them.

At those words, the frogs could no longer croak.



# Chapter 125 – Power Of Wealth (3)

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8.

– Breaking News! The Hahoe Mask is participating in the great battle at the Shezga castle!

Of course, the reaction to start of any rumor was weak.

– What about it?

– Even that weird bastard is lurking there. So what do you want us to do about it?

– What does the Hahoe Mask participating in the great battle at the Shezga castle have to with us?

Most weak rumors went away before it could gain steam. However, there were times when the weak rumor evolved into something bigger.

– The Hahoe Mask is doing a Hard Carry in the great battle!

This was the latter case.

– Hahoe Mask?



– Great battle?

– Hard Carry!

The combination of these three words captivated the fans of Warlord. Their attention was kidnapped towards the Shezga castle.

In that moment, the fertilizer needed for the news to prosper was laid.

9,

[Your Level has Increased.]

He had heard the Level Up announcement more than 160 times, so it failed to make his heart flutter. Hyrkan focused his gaze on the pandemonium in front of him.

Currently, groups were dispatched to various sectors to block the Corrupted army. A fierce battle was going on, but the defenders of Shezga castle was being pushed back.

Overall, the Corrupted army held the upper hand in the battle. It was like two fighters from different weight classes fighting against each other. Still, the defenders of the Shezga castle didn't fall immediately. They were still holding out. Naturally, the advance



of the Corrupted army came to a crawl.

Hyrkan licked his lips at the sight.

The licking of the lips was a representation of how he felt after he finished his Eat the Tail method.

The pieces were already in place, so everything happened as he expected.

He was able to do the Eat the Tail method only until the Corrupted army's advance came to a halt. If one tried the Eat the Tail method when the Corrupted army was stalled, the risk would be smaller than fighting from the front. Still, the Eat the Tail method would become riskier than the Gnawing method.

‘Bite it.’

At that moment, Hyrkan once again chewed on his lips. His lips were already wet, but we once again worried over his lips. The meaning behind this action was clear.

Anxiety.

Currently, Hyrkan was anxious.

‘I’ve already showed you this much. Just bite the bait.’



His goal wasn't to gain EXP. He had another goal.

‘You bastards call yourself gamers. Do you really want to run away like a dog with its tail between its legs?’

Why did people play games? It wasn't a complicated question. There wasn't some philosophical meaning behind why these people chose to play this game. They played it, because they wanted to. They played this game to be better than others, and they wanted to play it in style.

Hyrkan targeted this mentality.

Look at me! If you are with me, you'll get likes, follows or whatever admiration you want! You'll be able to be cool for a day as you play this game today!

In truth, it wasn't hard for Hyrkan to win over the Centurions. It wasn't as if the Centurions were given salaries for taking the position. These Users insisted on doing the dirty work, since they would be able gain some profit through their position as Centurion. The Centurions would willingly work with Hyrkan if their interests were aligned.

On the other hand, the Centurions didn't have as much control over the groups as they would like to think. The Users gathered under them weren't their underlings. If the Users were unwilling to do something, they left the stage. If the Users left, the Centurions were useless.



This was why Hyrkan had tried to win over the normal User to his side from the beginning.

All his actions up until now was to put hot air into the hearts of the normal Users.

‘The rumors should be spreading right now.’

Of course, the normal Users were in the midst of a battle, so they couldn’t check up on Hyrkan’s exploit with their own two eyes. They didn’t have the time to spare, and even if they had the time, they wouldn’t have done it. Still, this didn’t mean all the Users in battle were solely focused on the battle at hand.

Even if an important tests was around the corner, most students in school didn’t stay focused throughout the whole class. Most students got sidetracked at any given moment. Just because this was a battle it didn’t mean the Users didn’t get sidetracked. Tankers were in a different position where they had to stay focused at all time. However, it was easy for the priests and magicians to become sidetracked.

This inevitably led to one of them witnessing the Hahoe Mask’s exploits from somewhere. What happens after someone witnesses Hahoe Mask’s exploits? It was like passing notes in class. The information would spread to the surrounding Users. Since they had the Voice Talk program, they didn’t need to pass around a note. They just had to move their mouth couple of times.

After a certain amount of time passed, they reached a point



where the atmosphere became disarrayed.

When that moment came.....

“Hahoe Mask!”

In the end, the ones in charge would have to straighten out the distraction. To do this, they would have to come find the source of the distraction.

‘Ok.’

A light smile appeared on the lips he had tortured.

10.

– Team 5, 6, 11 and 12 will move out of the battle region. Team 1 and Team 2 is on standby. The remaining team’s Tanker line and Priest line will remain. All magicians will climb the castle wall!

Big K started to command his troops.

If it was normal times, this kinds of commands wouldn’t take root. If a User, who had come to a hunting ground to catch monsters were given an order completely unrelated to the task at hand, most of the Users would leave the party and logout.



It wasn't as if this wasn't happening amongst the Users here.

“Why is he suddenly acting this way? We were in the midst of a good hunt.”

“Crazy. Is he really going to attempt it? How come they are making such a unilateral decision!”

“This is driving me nuts. Why am I obligated to do this? Those bastards aren't my responsibility. Ah. Whatever. I'm out.”

However, this was a relatively few number of Users.

A significant number of complaints were cut down from the value placed on the name of the Hahoe Mask.

“I heard the Hahoe Mask isn't playing around in the rear.”

“I think he caught several hundred by himself.”

“Several hundred? No way. Even if he could catch one monster every minute, it would take him 5 hours to catch 300 monsters.”

“It's the Hahoe Mask. If he summoned 100 Skeletons, he could easily take down 300.”

“Stop speaking such nonsense.”



“Well, let’s at least try it out once. It isn’t as if an opportunity to hunt with the Hahoe Mask will present itself again. Moreover, the Hahoe Mask must have some kind of a plan in mind. Truthfully, if we stop the Corrupted Army here, wouldn’t it be a big deal?”

“The Hahoe Mask said he’ll allow us to take screenshots with him afterwards no matter what. It doesn’t matter if we win or lose. Let’s do this.”

“Ah, wait a moment. Let me update what is happening on Facebook.”

The rumor related to the Hahoe Mask had already gotten out of control. The truths became stretched, and it was spread amongst the defenders of the Shezga castle.

Some of the rumors said the Hahoe Mask had summoned 100 Skeletons, a Death Knight had appeared, a Fire Golem had appeared to turn the battle field in a sea of flame, the Hahoe Mask was able to contract space using magic...

Any rational person that heard the rumors knew it was absurd, but the truth wasn’t that important to the Users gathered in the Shezga castle.

First, this sounded fun. If they were really able to succeed in defending the castle, it would look incredibly cool!



These reasons allowed the users to be able to work in perfect order.

As Big K had commanded, the Tanker line alongside the Priests bought time as the Magicians quickly climbed to the top of the castle wall.

When the magicians started to arrive at the top of the castle wall, a new order was given.

- The Tanker line should narrow itself as you perform a slow retreat. You don't have to block every monster! If you don't think you can do it, just let them pass! We are going to let the monsters bang against the castle wall!

Give up the castle wall!

There was another debate going on in regards to this order, but from the perspective of the Tankers, this would give them time to recuperate. In truth, they were happy with the order, so they followed order without any complaint. The Tankers started to retreat from the battlefield as the priests took care of the Tankers. Of course, the Tankers and Priests that had retreated was put on standby.

- Ready your magic, magicians!

It was time for the magicians to shine. The magicians immediately rained down their magic against the monsters.



- Don't use your strong AOE magic. Use the single shot target magic!

Unlike before, they were going to use the meat and potato spells.

- Don't think of it as killing them with magic. You should think of it as destroying the defensive gears worn by the Corrupted army with magic!

The magicians became skeptical when they heard their orders.

‘Destroy their armors?’

‘Wouldn't that mean we won't be damaging them?’

Usually, the magic spells of the magicians were mainly used to deal damage. It wasn't used to destroy the armor. However, it wasn't as if it wasn't possible to do so. They could throw the low-grade magic at the monsters, but it would be an inefficient use of their magic considering their level.

Of course, they needed an explanation.

- After we destroy their gears, we'll have the deciding match inside the castle!

This explanation wasn't enough.



– This is the Hahoe Mask-style hunting method!

However, his following words erased the need for the magicians to get a full explanation.

‘If the Hahoe Mask want us to peel it, we’ll peel them like cloves of garlic.’

The magicians readied their magic. They weren’t using the powerful magic they learned after their 1st Advancement. They were using magic spells they used a long time ago.

“It’s been a long time since I’ve used the Fireball.”

“It’s been so long since I’ve use any ball type magic.”

“I never used ball or bolt type magic before, so my proficiency is very low. Will that be ok?”

“How should I know? Ask an intellectual about it.”

Not everyone followed the orders given. There were magicians, who decided to ready their big spells. In this world, there were always those who did the opposite of a given order.

However, there weren’t many Users like this, so it wouldn’t greatly change the balance of battle. They didn’t need everyone to



follow orders. They just needed most of them to follow directions.

“Start the bombardment!”

Magicians started to throw magic. Moreover, the magical spells were thrown without any rest.

The ball and bolt type magic neither had a long cool time nor a long casting time.

One person couldn't throw it endlessly, but several hundred magicians could endlessly cover the battlefield with magic if they matched their pace.

The magic was starting to create cracks in the armors worn by the monsters.

This was the moment when the battle entered into a new phase.

11.

“The magicians on top of the castle wall will break the armors worn by the monsters. Then congestion would start to occur at locations where the gate or the walls fall. The elite Tanker line will block as the big magic spells will be deployed.”

“Then?”



“The Users dispatched outside will Gnaw at the monsters that are too busy entering the castle gate.”

“Wouldn’t the Gnawing method take too long? In the end, wouldn’t there be a large number of monsters entering into the castle?”

“It will be a piece of cake to kill unarmored Corrupted monster in the street battle.”

“What should the command structure be like during the street battles? We won’t be able to control every small battle that breaks out.”

“Command structure doesn’t matter in this. It’ll be the same as hunting in the field. Each party will decide on a structure, and they can catch whatever monster they want.”

“If we do this through the street battles, the damage to the castle....”

“Do you have some kind of real estate investment in the Shezga castle?”

Big K didn’t have a retort to Hyrkan’s words. Big K just closed his mouth, and he smiled.

“Incredible.”



Hyrkan's strategy wasn't overly complicated. Actually, it was very simple. Since it was simple, he was able to quickly run the scenario inside his mind. For such a simple tactic, the result that was being drawn in his mind was surprising. Hyrkan's strategy wouldn't guarantee them a 100% win, but it put them in a shouting distance of actually being able to win this battle.

If the defenders in the Shezga castle numbered over 2,000, Hyrkan's method would guarantee a win. Of course, this was assuming a very competent commander like Hyrkan was present to direct the progress of the battle.

'If the 30 great guilds use this strategy... We'll win every time.'

This was why Big K was truly surprised, so he asked Hyrkan the question.

"How did you come up with this plan?"

Hyrkan wasn't able immediately give an answer to this question. Big K thought the snort was directed at him. It was as if he was saying, 'Do I really have to explain single detail?' Big K thought that was what Hyrkan's snort meant. In a way, it could be seen as an arrogant gesture. However, Big K thought it wasn't arrogant. He saw it as Hyrkan's self-confidence.

'He isn't just good at fighting. Does this mean he is also good at coming up with tactics? Is that how it is? He really has everything.'



At that moment, Big K understood why Chev thought so highly of Hyrkan.

Of course, there was a reason why Hyrkan hadn't answered the question. No, he couldn't answer it. The reason was simple.

‘Your guild created this tactic.’

The tactic that he proposed was something taken out of the Red Bull's manual.

When the Corrupted army went into Siege mode, one used Eat the Tail and Gnawing method to chip away at the Corrupted army. Then the magicians used a large amount of magic to disarm the Corrupted Monsters, and the number of monsters were significantly reduced when the congestion occurred. Afterwards, the street battles were used to finish off the Corrupted army. If they took this a step further, the remaining monsters in the castle could be herded outside of the castle, and they could be taken out with a bombardment of AOE magic. This last method was called the ‘Hangover’ method.

If one wanted to defend the castle, one had to minimize the damage to the castle. However, this was only true in real life. Warlord Users didn't have to care a whit about damaging the castle. This was also the impetus that led to the creation of this method.

This method was put out by the Red Bulls, and this method



became the standard tactic in the great battle. The entirety of the 30 great guilds followed the Red Bull's method, and the great battle quickly came to an end with the Users coming out on top. In the process of all of this, the Red Bull's stock rose considerably.

Now that stock increase would happen to Hyrkan. Hyrkan was slightly sorry about doing this, but his heart quickly swallowed up that feeling.

‘Well, who cares. I’m doing this to fatten up the 30 great guilds.’

In the end, wasn’t he doing something that would benefit the 30 great guilds? This thought made Hyrkan’s stomach ache.

‘No. If I’m being honest, I’m doing so much for the 30 great guilds right now. It wouldn’t be enough even if they paid me money.’

It happened at that moment.

Big K listened to his Voice Talk program, and he suddenly asked Hyrkan a question.

“Hahoe Mask. There is an interview request...”

Big K was about to speak, but he closed his mouth. He remembered that Hahoe Mask rarely gave an interview to the media. He realized he had made a big faux pas by asking for an interview. This was evidence that Big K’s thoughts were all



jumbled. He had let those words slip, since this was an urgent situation. Of course, Big K was ready for Hyrkan to refuse the offer.

“Interview? With the Red Bulls?”

Instead of turning him down, Hyrkan replied with a question. One of Big K’s eyebrows lifted slightly.

“No. It’s the Fruit Post.”

Fruit Post.

“How are you acquainted with the reporter?”

“I have personal connections.....”

“You have quite a strong network of contacts. You are able to get in touch with a reporter from the Fruit Post.”

When the Peach Saga V-Gear Series was released, the first order of business was creating a media company that dealt with the improving virtual reality contents. It was called the Peach company, and at the time, the company purchased a struggling traditional media company that was unable to adapt to the age of smartphones. This was how a new media company called Fruit Post came to be.



Currently, they covered a wide variety of contents regarding the virtual reality. Moreover, they were most popular for their work regarding Warlord. In terms of dealing with the weekly Warlord contents, their influence and impact was in the top 3 in regards to media companies.

Big K was close with several reporters from the Fruit Post, who dealt exclusively with Warlord. One of them had caught wind of the situation, and the reporter was trying to get an interview through Big K.

From the perspective of the reporter, it was akin to poking at a persimmons that was out of reach.

“All right. I’ll do the interview.”

However, Hyrkan agreed to do it.

The persimmons had just fallen into the open mouth of a reporter.

“Really?”

Big K was surprised, but he immediately reigned in his surprise. He swallowed his spit couple times before he asked a question.

“When do you want to schedule it?”



“I’ll do it now.”

“What?”

“I have time until the street battle starts. I have nothing to do until then. I’ll do the interview here. Just connect them to me.”

12.

– The Hahoe Mask’s interview is up!

– Is it a live interview? Give me the Fruit’s coordinate!

–  $\angle$   $37^{\circ} 22' 12''$  N,  $122^{\circ} 2' 24''$  W

–  $\angle$  Crazy son of a bitch. You gave me the coordinate to the Silicon Valley.

–  $\angle$  Fruit Post’s head office is in Silicon Valley.

Fruit Post did a live interview with Hyrkan, and this became a hot issue. The Warlord fans, who were captivated by the Hahoe Mask, naturally turned their gaze towards this interview.

While everyone’s attention was focused on him, Hahoe Mask revealed a strategy that would bring certain victory in the great battle. Moreover, he revealed every helpful strategy in the



interview.

Of course, Warlord fans weren't the only ones paying attention. The Warlord Users were watching the content of Hahoe Mask's interview in real time..

‘He’s still wearing the armor I gave him. As expected, I did good in making that. It looks good on him.’

The guild master of Stormhunters was watching.

‘I should have bribed him earlier. I never expected him to move so fast. How unfortunate.’

The guild master of the Red Bulls was also watching.

Also.....

“Thank you for agreeing with our request for an interview. The street battles are about to start. Do you have any last words for our viewers? For reference, over 20 million people are watching this live interview.”

“I can say anything? Even though this is a live broadcast?”

“Well, if there’s a problem, we just have to write up a report. Please keep the swearing to a minimum.”



“Truthfully, there is no reason why I should have to step up in this great battle. I’ll be a little bit more truthful with my words. I don’t gain anything from this venture, yet I am carrying out this work. The reason is quite simple.”

The Hands guild wasn’t really known in the world. This guild’s guild master was also watching the interview.

“Currently, the Users that aren’t participating in the great battle are suffering. The high level Users that aren’t participating in the great battle are camping out at the Subjugation Associations frequented by the low level Users. This gets in the way of low level Users completing their Quests, since the restless high level Users are exterminating all the nearby monsters. On the other hand, the low level users are having a hard time finding a hunting ground, because of the great battle.”

“Yes. The complaints are steadily getting louder.”

“No matter how I see it, the Users aren’t enjoying the great battle.”

“Then.....”

“I won’t say anything further. I just think that the situation needs a change. I’ll end the interview there.”

That was how the interview came to an end.



“Hahoe Mask. Put his name on the same rank as the First Head, the Storm Queen and the Matador.”

“Yes. I’ll contact you once I put the classification on him.”

A lot of things changed at that moment.



# Chapter 126 – Argardo Raid (1)

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1.

There was an appetizing pink sausage with egg wrapped around it in front of him. There was also fresh vegetable, tuna and a kelp soup with plenty of beef and seasoning in it. He piled on the side dishes on the bowl of white rice. Ahn-jaehyun was busy chewing, but his expression wasn't that great.

Surprisingly, Ahn-jaehyun was very dissatisfied with the menu.

‘If it wasn't for this event, I would have already replenished my strength by eating stamina-increasing food. I would be playing the game by now.’

In truth, Ahn-jaehyun had planned on stuffing himself with stamina-increasing food the whole time he was running the great battle. He was going to need a strong body more so than any other time, yet he recently felt his physical fitness get worse.

This was why he had saved up his money. Basically, he set aside a saving that was specifically for buying stamina-increasing food.

‘Shit. I never expected to spend so much here.’

The Shezga castle defense was over and his calculations was done. This was why he wasn't comfortable eating an expensive meal. He had spent way more than expected. Moreover, the bigger



problem was the fact that he had used most of the consumable Items he had in storage.

Warlord Users, especially the Rankers, had plenty of Storage space. With the important hunts, battles and raids in one's immediate future, one didn't have the time to be scrambling all over the place to purchase the consumables.

Currently, Ahn-jaehyun didn't just have one big mountain to climb. He had two big mountains left. Of course, Ahn-jaehyun was like an ant conserving food in the summer, so it could have a store in winter. He had to tighten his belt once again.

In that context, the food he was eating right now was definite proof that displayed Ahn-jaehyun's elevated position. His food and his position within Warlord had gone through a big change. This was seen on Ahn-jaehyun's youtube page. The number of subscribers, the number of people viewing his videos, and the purchase of his pay-per-view video was on an upward trajectory again.

This was especially true about the videos he released during the defense of the Shezga castle. He had revealed the know-hows of the great battle for the first time. His Eat the Tail video had already racked up close to 30 million views. This thought relaxed his rigid expression.

'Well, I won't be able to recover it immediately, but I'll slowly gain back what I invested this time around.'



When he thought about the recent corporate sponsorship proposal he received, the pink sausage tasted like a Wagyu steak. His food tasted better. Ahn-jaehyun's spoon and chopsticks started to move vigorously.

‘Huh?’

Before he knew it, Ahn-jaehyun had let go of his spoon.

‘It's finally happened!’

Ahn-jaehyun had moved past the 80% mark of climbing a mountain, and the 90% mark was in sight right in front of him.

2.

After the Hahoe Mask's interview ended, all the 30 great guilds fought each other to be the first one to announce that they were going to participate in the great battle. It was as if they had been waiting for this opportunity.

“We will only participate in the great battle in stages where the normal Users are suffering. Aside from those instances, we will leave the rest to the Users. Please think of our actions as maintaining the order.”

Their excuse was that they were going to maintain order.



Of course, the normal Users were split on the decision.

If one set aside whether the defense of the castles was successful or not, there were a portion of Users that were benefitting greatly from participating in the great battle. They opposed the decision made by the 30 great guilds. It was a fact. If the 30 great guilds participated, the pie had to be shared with more people. Moreover, the Hahoe Mask had revealed how to clear the Corrupted army. If the Underfoot guilds, and the Users massed in numbers, they were confident that they could succeed in defending the castles by themselves.

On the other hand, the Users below level 100, who hadn't participated in the great battle, rejoiced at the 30 great guild's participation. It was true that the high level Users caused a lot of disturbance in hunting grounds occupied by the low level Users. The 30 great guilds were going to fix that problem, so there was no reason for them to disagree with the 30 great guild's announcement.

The opinions were split, but the important part was that there was a portion of the Users that agreed with the involvement of the 30 great guilds.

During all of this, the V&V guild and the 8 guilds, who had announced their non-participation, was put in an awkward spot.

There were a lot of chatter online about them.

– What about those guilds that put out a joint statement saying



they won't participate in this event?

– If those guys have any honor or pride, they'll stay out of this.

For these 9 guilds, the breakthrough happened when they decided to retake the castles instead of defending them. The 9 guilds aggressively stepped forward to take back the fallen castles.

Some Users saw it as a hollow gesture, but they weren't too upset by it. The retaking of the castles was couple degrees harder than defending it. This was confirmed when the retaking efforts failed multiple times in a row.

This resulted in the 30 great guilds not competing against each other as everyone contributed in different roles.

Some participated in the retaking the castles and the rest defended the castles. The Users had been pushed back endlessly, but the situation was quickly changing.

The Corrupted army was starting to be pushed back. The Corrupted army had to turn the tide of the battle, so a new card was played by them.

It appeared at that moment.

[An incredible Boss Monster has appeared at the Havanz castle!]



3.

Havanz castle.

In the past, it had been called the Cursed castle, and it was at this location where the Corrupted army's hidden ace card made an appearance.

Havanz castle.

The dreary atmosphere from the past was gone. It was a place where high level Users wearing elegant and expensive Items frequented before. The castle was in an appalling state compared to the past. The castle walls looked like ruins that had been destroyed several thousand years ago. Moreover, it was hard to find an intact buildings beyond the castle wall.

“Start the magical bombardment!”

On this wretched stage, a heartless assessment started once again.

Before the man's shout could come to an end, several hundred magicians used their pre-casted magic.

At the very least, one had to be over level 130.



At the very least, one had to have a Rank of Rare.

These were the magicians that had invested all their Stats into Intelligence. They were popularly known as the 'Extreme Mages'.

The use of their magic was harmonious. The earth type magic was the first to be used. Uniform earthen walls erupted from the ground. It was over 20 meters tall. However, these weren't just simple earthen walls. It was called the Shield Wall, and it was able to stop physical and magical attacks.

The Shield Walls gathered to form a triangle.

The powerful magic spells were thrown into the triangle. The enormous fireballs burned the forest, and the thunder strikes were falling like a shower. Enormous ice spears were descending like lightning.

Koo koo koo!

The powerful magic made the ground cry.

Hell.

This was the only expression that could describe the scene.

The one watching this sight was Sweeper guild's primary Raid



team leader. Spearman Ichni gulped.

‘Please work.’

It didn’t matter in regards to other aspects, but the Sweepers guild was known for being the best in fighting with magic amongst the 30 great guilds. The large scale magic bombardment shown right now by the Sweepers guild was something they were proud of.

This was why Ichni always smiled with confidence when he saw the powerful collaboration of magic.

However, he felt a mixture of fear, nervousness and anxiousness as he swallowed his spit. This was the first time for him.

‘I’m not expecting it to die, but at the very least, I want it to take some damage. Just a little bit. If that doesn’t happen, at least damage its armor! Please!’

He even prayed.

However, Ichni gulped once again as the prayer fell to the pit of his stomach.

Kwah-ahng!

A thundering noise rang out as one Shield Wall broke. All the



racket created by various magic leaked out of the hole. Smoke, fire, sparks... On top of all the noise, one could hear the sound of footsteps.

The owner of footsteps was a knight wearing armor. The armor he wore wasn't normal. It was a silver colored armor with a black pattern on it. There was an eagle's head decorated on the right shoulder, and the left shoulder was decorated with the head of a lion. On his chest, there was the circular crest of the three snakes biting each other.

On top of it all, the black pattern was perpetually moving like a living fish across the silver armor.

The knight didn't have a shield.

Instead, he held a sword that constantly rang out as if it was weeping.

In some ways, the sword looked shabby and worthless.

Large boss monsters were big enough to intimidate the Users on sight. However, this knight was of a size where it was hard to locate him in the mayhem.

When Ichni caught sight of the knight, he desperately yelled out. It was the first time he yelled out like this, since he started playing Warlord.



“Retreat!”

“What?”

At Ichni’s command, his subordinate next to him reflexively asked the question. In truth, it was hard for him to comprehend why they had to retreat. It had been less than 10 minutes, since they had started the battle with the knight. After several sporadic exchange, this was the first time they had used the magic bombardment in earnest, yet they were going to retreat?

However, Ichni was decisive.

“How can we fight something that can’t be damage by physical, magical or holy attacks? Everyone retreat!”

“Ah, yes.”

The leader’s orders were absolute. His subordinate didn’t dispute Ichni’s orders. He instructed everyone to retreat. Since there were a lot of Users gathered here, the retreat didn’t just occur from speaking just one or two words. They wasted some time telling everyone of the retreat order.

In reality, it wasn’t a lot of time.

It took them around 10 seconds, but...



‘Huhk!’

Ichni’s subordinate was passing down the order when the knight that had been far away came into view.

It didn’t feel as if the knight had approached him. It was as if the knight had disappeared, and it just appeared right in front of his eyes.

Moreover, the knight had his sword raised up high, and the sword was already descending when the Ichni’s subordinate realized the knight was there.

Kahng!

Fortunately, Ichni raised his spear to block the sword strike. His subordinate stumbled backward in fright.

“Just ignore me! Evacuate!”

Ichni encouraged his subordinate to run away. His subordinate wordlessly got out of there quickly.

The knight was right in front of his eyes, so Ichni was finally able to get a good look at the knight in front of him. While they were in close proximity to each other, Ichni could see the milky white eyes flash from within its helmet.



‘Isn’t he the left hand of Prince Dean? It’s sir Argardo.’

After a brief moment, he sized up the situation.

Ggee-eek, ggee-eek!

The shaft of Ichni’s spear was starting to be cut incrementally as it blocked Argardo’s sword. It wasn’t as if the sword was making a sawing motion. This was occurring just from having the sword pressing firmly against the shaft.

“Coating!”

Ichni reflexively used his Skill.

The Skill he used was called Coating. For a limited amount of time, the skill made it impossible for one’s weapon and armor to be destroyed. It was a Unique Skill, and it wasn’t easy to acquire.

Since it wasn’t easy to acquire, this meant the effectiveness of the skill was certain.

However, Ichni had took his eyes off his opponent to use the skill. At that moment, Argardo kicked Ichni in the stomach.

Ggwah-roong!



The impact caused a sound that was akin to a thunder clap. Ichni's body flew away like stone skipping across the surface of a lake. He was sent roughly skipping across the ground.

‘Fffuuuuuuuhhhhck!’

His world was spinning at that moment.

In the extremely chaotic situation, Ichni came to a stop, and he looked in front of him.

‘Where is he?’

Argardo wasn't in his field of vision. Ichni had a small hunch. He raised his head slightly to look up. Ichni was finally able to see Argardo.

Poohk!

Argardo's sword skewered Ichni's head.

– Ooh-ahk. He became a roadkill.

– Spearman Ichni couldn't even last a minute.

– Isn't that the Sweeper guild's Raid Team? In truth, the result was to be expected.



– Sweepers guild mainly deal with clearing monsters. Their Raid team can't even crack the Top 10 in terms of power. Still, this was way too one-sided.

The White-eyed knight sir Argardo.

He was called the left hand of Prince Dean. After the Sweepers guild acquired the rights to the Raid, they immediately broadcasted the raid live.

A significant number of people purchased the live ticket, and the ripple caused by what had happened on live broadcast was seen in the comments section.

Shir read the responses, and she turned her head. Hatch was watching the same broadcast, and he spoke when he felt her gaze on him.

“Do you have a question for me?”

“What are your thoughts on what just happened?”

“Do you want my opinion on Argardo or the Sweepers guild?”

“Both.”

The answer came from a different source.



“If the Queen and I fight him, that NPC will be beaten to a pulp within 10 minutes! In the first place, the Sweepers guild was out of their minds if they thought they could deal with...”

“Hey! Filter your words! Chose your words more carefully!”

Storm Princess Hahui was about to say the Sweepers guild was trying eat something that was out of their reach. However, Hatch cut her off.

“Does that mouth say anything it wants?”

“What did you just say?”

Hahui glared at Hatch. However, Hatch justly ignored Hahui. He spoke to Shir.

“We checked up on it, and Skills won’t work on it. It isn’t affected by physical attacks and magical attacks. It might be the armor, but on the other hand, it could be some unknown skill granted to it by the Corrupted power. ”

The White-eyed knight sir Argardo.

The information about this NPC was pretty widespread. Amongst the NPC knights in Warlord, it was considered to be in the top 10. Of course, when the Immoral Prince was revealed to be Prince



Dean, the battle with Argardo was inevitable.

It was a matter of when, where and how. It was going to happen eventually.

Now everyone was aware of this fact.

“How is it compared to the Corrupted Count?”

“In an RPG game, the goblin that appears later in the game is much stronger than the dragon from the early portions of the game. They aren’t even comparable.”

“Give me a more detailed explanation.”

“The knight’s close combat ability is on a whole different level compared to the monsters we’ve faced until now. Do you mind if I speak a little bit more bluntly?”

“Speak.”

“In my opinion, the knight is better than the Queen.”

“You want to die?”

Hahui once again interrupted the conversation.



Hatch let out a sigh.

He had on an expression that said, ‘What do I have to do to make this bitch shut up?’

“What evidence do you have?”

Shir glanced at Hahui. Hahui clamped her mouth shut, and at the same time, she pouted.

After seeing this, Hatch immediately opened his mouth.

“When facing this enemy, experience in PVP is much more important than Raid experience. This is the Queen’s weakness.”

Shir nodded her head

It was true. Shir was also strong at PVP. There weren’t that many people, who she considered to be her peer. In a one on one fight, the number of Users that could confidently beat her could be counted on the fingers of her hand. This was the case even if she searched through the entire User base of Warlord.

However, this didn’t mean she had a lot of experience of fighting one on one battles. In the first place, how many Users would try to PK her? Even if one wanted to PK her, one would be cut down before one could even reach her.



Of course, this wasn't a weakness that was only present in Shir.

“The problem is this weakness is present in most of the Strikers representing the 30 great guilds.”

The 30 great guild's primary raid teams were mainly made out of Strikers. They were called the stars of Warlord, and it was almost impossible for the normal Users to even meet them. In other words, these particular Users had never had any harrowing experiences.

There was a lack of PVP experience, yet the battle with Argardo required competence in PVP. Even if one put aside the disparity in number, the outcome of this battle was hard to predict. The Sweepers guild had deployed their massive bombardment of magic skills, yet it hadn't worked at all.

“If we can catch this bastard, the game will be set.”

Argardo was the perfect trophy. The guild that kills it would be called the best for a good amount of time.

Hatch nodded his head. There was a very slim chance for success, but they couldn't avoid the battle with Argardo. If one did avoid it, it would damage one's reputation more so than losing to Argardo.

“I'll go apply for the raid. We'll be in the back of the queue, but we won't have to worry about the order of queue.”



When Argardo was taken down, there would only be one thing left afterwards.

“Then we’ll get ready for the Immoral Prince raid.”

When one era comes to an end, one had to get ready for the new era.



## Chapter 127 – Argardo Raid (2)

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5.

Through the sacrifice of an unknown magician, the Cursed castle had been sealed in its appalling state. The castle regained its light through the actions of four heroes. Afterwards, those equipped with fancy Items filled up the castle. A flower had bloomed, and it was named Havanz castle.

However, the elegant castle was now stained alongside the White-eyed Knight. The Havanz castle's appearance turned more horrifying in appearance than the time it was called the Cursed Castle. A worse sense of despair filled the castle.

To fight against this despair, stars instead of fancy flowers started to gather.

Users that numbered easily over a thousand was positioned at a location where they could see the Havanz castle. This wasn't a village. There was no barricades formed here. If one insisted on making a comparison, this was like a massive camping ground or something similar to one. In the normal logic of Warlord, this was a dangerous thing to be doing. They were basically defenseless against the attacks of monsters.

However, none of the Users here were worried. The monsters that appeared near Havanz castle was like pocket change or an ice cream dessert that cleansed their palate.



Currently, beings that would freak out even these Users had just appeared.

“It’s been awhile.”

A star amongst stars had appeared. In fact, there was more than one. Two stars had appeared.

“I’m talking to you. Isn’t it normal for a person to at least nod their head? Why do you have to behave so coldly towards me?”

“What business do you have with me?”

It was Shir and Chev.

Users of great skill and renown had appeared in front of the Havanz castle for the Argardo Raid. However, they paled in comparison to these two. These Users were no longer qualified to play a leading role or a supporting role. They had been turned into spectators in front of these two.

The Users focused their attention on the meeting happening between these two.

These two were stars amongst stars. Shir and Chev wasn’t bother by all the gazes focused on them as they revealed their true colors. Shir was treating Chev in a very cold manner. There was no need to act as if they were on good terms. Moreover, there was a good reason why they weren’t on good terms.



“I’m not here for anything too important. I checked your number, and you guys are going after us. So I decided to greet you.”

Shir’s expression crumpled at Chev’s words.

This was the reason why their already bad relationship had worsened.

“You are here to provoke me.”

“No way.”

Anyone could see that the Argardo Raid was like an exclamation point to the great battle. This was why everyone competed with each other to participate in the Argardo Raid. The order had been determined through lottery. The Stormhunters were going right after the Red Bulls.

Of course, it soured Shir’s mood.

‘If it was any other guild than the Red Bulls....’

The Stormhunters guild was pretty far down the queue. Including the Red Bulls, there were a total of four guilds from the 30 great guilds in front of her.



However, only the Red Bulls was a thorn in her eyes. If other guilds succeed in the Argardo Raid, it would be considered a miracle. However, this could be an easy win for the Red Bulls. This was how highly she thought of the Red Bulls.

On top of it all, Chev had come to check up on the situation himself even though their turn wasn't up yet.

This wasn't an attempt by the Red Bulls to use a hot topic to sell more live tickets. His actions was meant to say he was going to attempt this as if everything was on the line.

Shir was here for similar reasons as Chev.

Chev had come close to provoking Shir on purpose for similar reasons too.

They weren't competitors that were fighting head to head against each other. The two of them had their arrows aimed at the same target. There was no way a cordial atmosphere could blossom in this situation. Instead, sparks were flying between them.

Everyone gossiped as they saw this sight.

"I guess one of those two guilds will succeed."

"Don't you think Red Bulls have the higher probability to kill it?"



“It’s the opposite. If the Red Bulls reveal most of their strategy in the Raid, Storm Hunter’s success rate would rise significantly.”

“It is a matter of if one will eat first or eat off the floor.”

There was someone, who was viewing these two Users, with very sharp eyes.

‘In the end, the Hahoe Mask made it possible for those two to take flight. He did something very troublesome.’

Sinclair was with the V&V guild. He was here as a the member of the Raid party. They were going to attempt the Argardo raid in several hours. He let out a bitter when he saw the Storm Queen and the Matador appear.

However, there was someone observing Sinclair with sharp eyes.

‘What is that bastard here?’

This User was wearing a blandly designed steel armor. His helmet covered his whole face, and he wore a cape. He looked like a typical Swordsman Class type User that one could see everywhere in Warlord.

When Hyrkan discovered Sinclair, his heart sank.

‘This is going sideways again. Why the hell is that bastard here



with the V&V logo on his chest?’

Hyrkan wasn't here to participate in the Argardo Raid by himself.

Argardo dropped incredible Items. The Argardo Armor set was a level 180 Chronicle Unique Rank Item. The Crying Sword was a level 180 Chronicle Epic Item. The two Items could be used until mid level 200s. The weapon was a very good one.

However, it would be difficult for Hyrkan to gain this weapon.

‘Shit. It won't be easy to join as the third wheel.’

The Argardo Raid couldn't be soloed. If he only had to fight Argardo, Hyrkan would have attempted the Raid already. Of course, his chances wouldn't be great.

The problem with the Argardo Raid was the fact that this wasn't a simple Boss Raid. This was a Raid happening in the framework of the great battle.

First, one had to defeat the Corrupted army defending the Havanz castle. Then one had to climb the castle wall. One had to win the siege of the Havanz castle to be able to acquire a ticket to fight Argardo. However, this was impossible for Hyrkan to do by himself.

This was why Hyrkan had planned on making a deal. He had



planned on joining a decent Underfoot guild that was an ace card short of winning this Raid. From their perspective, there was no reason why they would refuse the deal.

At the very least, it wouldn't prevent others especially the 30 great guilds from killing Argardo. The deal would be much better than sucking their thumbs as others killed Argardo.

However, Sinclair had appeared as the member of V&V guild. Sinclair was a User that already tried to kill Hyrkan. There had been no discernable reason behind it. He thoughtlessly attempted a PK on Hyrkan.

‘If I talk about the Watchman style once again in front of him, I bet he’ll try to find my house and beat me up.’

If Hyrkan was in Sinclair’s shoes, his eyes would roll back in anger once he spotted him.

‘Shit. It seems I’ll have to change my plan.’

Hyrkan once again swallowed the bitter words. At that moment, Sinclair turned his head slightly to look at Hyrkan. Sinclair had felt Hyrkan looking at him. At that moment, Hyrkan was freaking out, but he didn’t show any outward signs. If he looked away or turned his gaze away, it would make Sinclair suspicious.

Sinclair tilted his head in confusion when he saw Hyrkan.



‘Who is that? Is he looking at me? Am I tripping?’

That was the extent of this thoughts.

“Ah. They are moving.”

“What were they talking about?”

Shir and Chev had finished their conversation. They turned their backs, and they walked away from each other. The gazes that had been on the two split as they went in different directions. When they disappeared from the stage, the Users were filled with curiosity. They started talking to each other privately.

In such a restless atmosphere, Sinclair and Hyrkan was nowhere to be seen.

6.

“Give up! Give up on it!”

When that shout was heard, the Argardo Raid’s message board became noisy.

– They admitted defeat! They couldn’t even get over the castle wall!



- Mediocre Users were gathered to increase the headcount. This was to be expected.

- I got a 1.05 times return. Thank you for the meal.

- └ I flagged you for illegal betting before I leave.

The Users gathered to make the Kill the Knight Team to run the Argardo Raid. However, this team had just gave up on the Raid.

The Kill the Knight was a team created by 1,200 Users. This team couldn't even climb the castle wall that had been crushed by the Raid Teams before them. Of course, the Cement Worms were working on repairing the fallen castle wall, so it was only somewhat patched up. The Kill the Knight team wanted to take advantage of this fact, yet their battle was conducted in a very sloppy manner.

The critical blow came when the castle wall fell. The Users rushed in to enter the castle when the entrance became congested. This congestion allowed the enemies to use AOE attacks to cause Game Over to a lot of Users.

This was why retaking the castles were scary. It was as it was revealed in the Hahoe Mask's know-how video. The attack on the congestion assured a certain victory in the defense of the castles. However, the congestion was now morphed into an obstacle for the Users. This method of attack assured certain victory, and it wasn't easy to come up with a method to counter it.



In truth, no one had expected the Kill the Knight team to succeed. One needed incredible amount of magical firepower to clear away the monsters like the Sweepers guild, or one needed a peerless heavyweight that could make split-second decisions within a battle. It was meaningless to have only a high number of Users.

- Too bad about the V&V guild. They were able to reach the battle with Argardo, but they had to retreat eventually.

- Since we are talking about the V&V guild, there was a User that was incredibly skilled User that was killing the monsters. Why didn't that User step up to fight Argardo?

- ┐ I'm also curious. He fought better than the Users that actually fought Argard. However, he was missing.

The Warlord fans were excited about the 3 teams that would be attempting the Raid after the Kill the Knight team.

- Anyways, this 3 consecutive battles will settle it.

- That's true.

It was set up in such a way that three guilds in the 30 great guilds were attempting the Argardo Raid one after another.

- So the order is Big Smiles, Red Bulls and Stormhunter?



In terms of conducting Raids, these two guilds were opined to being the best in Warlord. This fact was why everyone had high expectations. They were overflowing with anticipation. It wasn't an exaggeration to say that if these two guilds failed, no one could think of any other guilds that would be able to succeed in the Raid.

Of course, there was also the guild that became the butt of the joke.

- Even if Big Smiles will be the card that will be discarded, Red Bulls and the Stormhunter will end this.

- ⊥ Why is the Big Smiles the card that is being thrown away? They are the strongest guild in China. If we compare the Big Smiles to the other two guilds, there is no reason why Big Smiles should be put on a lower standing.

- ⊥ Strongest in China = Weakest in the world.

- ⊥ They only know how to move in big numbers. What else are they good at?

- ⊥ They move in swarms, and they get beat a lot. They are very good at that.

- ⊥ I'll give you a 1 thumbs up.



The Big Smiles were put in the a conversation alongside the other two guilds, and they were being roasted mercilessly.

The result of these opinions appeared in the amount of live tickets that was sold. The Big Smile's Argardo Raid only sold 290,000 live tickets. Even if one took into account of having only one day to sell the ticket, Big Smiles had the largest pool of fans from China. From Big Smiles' perspective, this hurt their pride.

"Shit. They want me to stay as rear support doing the useless tasks. They are completely treating me like trash. How dare they!"

He didn't really care about this Raid, but he was put in rear support even though he was an officer. If he wanted to describe the situation with a Korean expression, he had joined in this Raid as a side dish. It was a big hit to Apollo's pride.

Chiroro was once again put next to Apollo to appease him. His pride was hurt in a big way too, and it was twisting everything he felt.

'You are trash.'

Apollo wasn't qualified to participate in a Raid of this level. He wasn't short on Items and levels, but his personal skills were very lacking. If this Raid had a cap on how many people could participate in it, Apollo's name wouldn't even have made it onto the reserve list. This was the opposite situation where there were no constraints on how many Users the guild could bring. This was the reason why Apollo was able to participate in the Argardo Raid.



Of course, that wasn't the only reason.

'If you hadn't paid off Brooks, no one would choose a trash like you.'

Brooks was an officer of the Big Smiles, and he had helped Apollo get in on the Raid. In simple terms, Brooks had been bribed.

'I wonder how much he is getting?'

This was obvious, but everything Apollo did was possible, because he had given Brooks a lot of money.

From Chiroro's perspective, he didn't like the current situation at all. He didn't like attending Apollo. On top of it all, he had no expectation regarding the Argardo Raid.

'Our guild is hanging by a thread. Why are we doing this Raid? It isn't as if we brought our main force.'

The Big Smiles was attempting the Argardo Raid since it was a hot topic right now. It seemed they were just thinking about selling some live tickets. Of course, there was a reason behind this. Big Smiles guild had been one of the nine guilds that announced their nonparticipation. They probably wouldn't have done this if they hadn't announced their nonparticipation.



It was a fact. They had no chance of winning.

The details of the plan hasn't come out yet, but Chiroro could tell what would happen. They'll get past the castle wall, and they'll get to see Argardo's face. After tangling with Argardo, they'll leave after the requisite time was filled. Since they've sold the live tickets, they would have to maintain the battle for an hour. That was how long a normal Raid took.

When his thoughts reached that point, Chiroro's face unconsciously twisted to reveal his true feelings. He was about to lose control over his expression.

It happened at that moment...

“Aren't you Chiroro-nim?”

Someone was calling out Chiroro's name as he was approaching him. Chiroro's expression immediately changed when he saw the him.

“Sinclair-nim?”

The identity of this Users was Sinclair, who had participated the Argardo raid as a member of the V&V guild. He had finished participating in the Argardo Raid, yet he was back once again after only a short amount of time had passed.

Of course, he wasn't here to meet Chiroro. He wanted to check



on the progress of the Stormhunters and Red Bulls. Still, it was a bit awkward for him to stand there by himself, since the V&V guild had already left. Sinclair decided to greet Chiroro, who was close to being an officer in the Big Smiles guild.

“What are you doing here?”

“I was about to pass by after I assess the situation, and I caught sight of Chiroro-nim. I came here to greet you.”

“I’m not at a level where I should be greeted by you. I’m honored.”

The two of them weren’t that close. Sinclair had helped out the Big Smiles guild several times, and Chiroro had been present during such an event.

On the other hand, Apollo didn’t have any connections to Sinclair. From Apollo’s perspective, he suddenly felt listless.

Apollo was impatient as he opened his mouth.

“Who is this?”

Chiroro’s expression crumpled slightly at the question. However, Apollo was an officer, so he couldn’t just brush him off. Chiroro introduced Sinclair to Apollo. After introductions, the two Users shook hands.



At that moment, two Users located not too far away were also shaking hand. They were standing in a very secluded location where no one could see them.

7.

A Raid was like a game of Go.

An opponent always moved in a pattern. One had to analyze this pattern, and one had to come up with a way to deal with this pattern. One had to try to read the opponent's move, and the opponent would react accordingly. Raid was only a several degree different from Go.

It wasn't easy to come up with a plan for a Raid assault. With regards to coming up with a plan, there was a strategist that was known to be very good working for the Red Bulls, and he had come up with a plan for the Argardo raid.

However, the plan that was made by the strategist Nunum was scrapped.

“Are we really going to do this?”

It was an order from Chev.

He suddenly requested a sudden change in the plan.



“Is it possible?”

“I can do it, but do you really want to do this?”

The reason behind this move was too surprising. This was why Nunum was asking the question again. However, Chev answered the question with a smile. However, the smile didn't explain anything, so he still had a silly expression on his face. Finally, Chev explained his decision.

“In any case, our chance for victory isn't that high. If that is the case, I would rather make this more fun. We have to take our viewers into account. At the very least, our viewers won't be disappointed if we use this method.”

At those words, Nunum put on an awkward smile as he thought about it.

‘They won't be a disappointed. It'll be a jackpot no matter the result.’



## Chapter 128 – Argardo Raid (3)

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8.

– Retreat!

The order for retreat came from the front line, and Chiroro had heard it through the Voice Talk. Chiroro frowned as he looked to his side. Apollo was standing next to him. When the Raid started, it sounded as if he was constantly eating something. This was a first time since the start of the Raid where he wasn't eating anything. In fact, Apollo threw his food aside as he yelled out.

“I knew this would happen. This is what you get for putting shitty people in the front. This is the end result! Hoong!”

Chiroro couldn't help, but let out a bitter laugh as he looked at Apollo. He had the same feeling as Apollo except it was in regards to Apollo. On top of it all, Chiroro was thinking about something else.

‘Why was Sinclair-nim interested in a bastard like Apollo?’

The thought of the Big Smiles guild participating in the Argardo Raid was already gone from his mind.

This wasn't happening only with Chiroro.



Most Warlord fans wouldn't even remember the Big Smiles guild's defeat. There was no space inside their heart and mind to care about the Big Smiles guild.

9.

After Agardo appeared, there were always a thousand to two thousand Users around the Havanz castle. Half of them were spectators. This was obvious, but it was hard to see the action from outside. What one was able to see from outside the Havanz castle was much inferior to what one could see from purchasing the live ticket.

Despite this fact, people gathered around the Havanz castle. This was like watching a baseball game from the far bleachers where one could barely see anything. The Users just wanted to be there. In truth, they wanted to be part of history.

If one wanted to speak more bluntly about this, it was possible to see a live broadcast inside Warlord. The Users were watching it live after positioning themselves near the Havanz castle.

In others words, the number of people gathered around the Havanz castle was a measure of the interest level, popularity, anticipation and ability of the teams attempting the Raid.

Currently, there were almost 6 thousand Users around Havanz castle, and about 5 thousand of them were spectators. There were a good number of Users, who hadn't even reached level 100, present here. They had risked their lives to come to the castle. This Raid



had the power to draw them there.

“Did you get familiar with the plan?”

The group was wearing helmets with horns that reminded one of a bull’s horns. The group had a lot of power.

One million seventy nine thousand live tickets were sold.

Seven hundred twelve members were participating in the Raid.

The average level for the Users participating in the Raid was 161.

The Red Bulls were ready for the Argardo Raid, and there were numerous ways they could have decorated themselves.

“I am well-acquainted with it.”

His subordinate didn’t speak any further. When he heard his leader’s words, he didn’t give any excuses. He didn’t ask for more time to conduct an inspection.

Their confidence was top notch.

Chev’s mouth looked like a crescent moon when he heard the other’s answer.



“Battle.”

The crescent moon revealed white chiclets attached to it, and he spoke in a low voice.

“Start!”

10.

It was a massive battle where a large force was going up against a large force. The most important group in the fighting force was the magicians. The winner or loser in a large scale battle swung on whether a group had an effective magical power system.

So what did it mean to have an effective magical power system?

First, one had to apply the magic at the right location. The powerful magical spells exacted an equal price. It consumed an incredible amount of magical power, and the cool time was long. It would be a big waste to use a big magic on a small target.

However, the more important aspect was accuracy. Magic didn't differentiate between allies and enemies. If one used a magic with low accuracy near a comrade, it was the most effective form of betrayal.

Of course, one needed practice to increase the accuracy of magic. Ballista Hatch from the Stormhunters was able to accurately throw long range magic on the move, yet this wasn't a common skill.



Most people couldn't do what Hatch could do.

As the distance increased, the target movement increases and the magician's movement increases, the accuracy of the magic decreased.

The method devised to solve this problem was target designation.

“Monsters are entering the F11 region! Fire!”

“Fire!”

On the stage of a battlefield, target areas were drawn. The magicians practiced throwing magic to target designation beforehand. After several hours of practice, one could achieve very high accuracy at throwing magic to the target designations.

The only thing left was for the Tankers to lure the monsters to the target designation.

At the same time, the magicians had to control the attribute of the attack magic. The wrong attribute could damage the Tankers significantly.

F meant Fire. The Tankers luring the monsters to this target designation had fire resistance setting.

“The Monsters in F11 region is in a critical state! Strikers!”



On top of it all, the Strikers were tirelessly running around the stage, and they prevented the waste of magic.

The monsters with low HP was called low blood. One needed to do a little more damage to kill it, so magic wouldn't have to be used again. These low bloods were the responsibility of the Strikers. This was not an insignificant role.

Moreover, Red Bulls' Strikers were faster and better than any other group of Strikers. They were like ghosts at finding weaknesses of the weakened monsters. They used a suitable combo skill to kill it in one blow. They symbolized the Red Bulls. The Strikers were the horns of a bull.

They moved with indescribably sophisticated movements.

Red Bull's sophisticated non-stop movements gave them a disparate sense of beauty. This was the reason why there were so many Red Bulls fans. If one looked under the hood of the Red Bulls guild, one wouldn't be able to find a more finely tuned machine. The result that came out of this sophistication was unbelievably rough and harsh.

“The castle wall has fallen!”

It had been 18 minutes since the battle had started, and the Red Bulls had taken down the castle wall that had been barely repaired by the Cement Worms.



When the castle wall fell, elite troops appeared.

It was the Primary Raid team, which consisted of Chev and the best Users of Red Bulls. They stepped over the fallen wall.

This elite troop was the most important amongst their forces. They should have felt some burden on their shoulder as they were inserted into face Argardo. However, none of them felt a sense of burden, since they didn't have a reason to feel such pressure.

“This is only the warm up. Don't over do it.”

“Yes!”

This was the warm up. No one in this world would feel overwhelmed from doing a warm up.

11.

Hatch was on standby near the Havanz castle. If the Red Bulls guild lost, it would be time for the Stormhunters guild to step forward. Hatch and the other officers was nearby as they surveyed the current situation.

On the other hand, it would be understandable if Hatch felt offended at doing the grunt work. However, Hatch loved this assignment. He was finally alone. Hahui was always tormenting



him, so Hatch was thankful of any assignment that guaranteed his separation from her.

‘It does feel a little bit lonely without that endlessly chattering girl.’

Hatch felt an unknown sadness. However, that sadness disappeared when the Red Bulls’ battle started. A sound could be heard as Hatch watched the battle occurring in front of him. The sound was background noise coming from the Hologram monitor. He had purchased the live broadcast.

Endless reaction was being written in the chat window below the live footage.

– As expected of the Red Bulls! They are incredibly fast!

‘If they can’t do something of this level, they should just fold.’

– Big Smiles can’t even hold a candle to them.

‘They deserve to be shut down. How are they still holding out? I think Fighters guilds is better than them.’

– Is it really ok to bring out the primary raid team so fast? What if they receive damage?

‘They can’t be afraid of their elite troop taking damage. Then



there's no point in having an elite troop. In the Corrupted Count Raid, do you guys realize the Hydra guild had held back Sohank, and their raid turned to shit?'

– Do you think they'll be able to catch Agardo? Truthfully, all the other guilds reached this point.

'This guy knows how to watch this game. Argardo is a troublesome opponent. Its small stature is the most troublesome part. Only four Users can attack it at once. However, only two can can attack it during a close battle. One has to attempt an Armor Break, while the other attacks. This is the best method, and there is no way one could get magical support.'

– I think they'll be able to do the Armor Break. However, will their attack work after the Armor Break? It has yet to take any damage. Maybe we aren't suppose to catch it. Maybe there is some other method to clear it.

'Yes. An invincible monster sometimes means there is something else going on. It is a storyline seen often in games. This guy also knows a little bit about games.'

– Big Smiles guild was able to reach here. In truth, I don't see what's so special about the Red Bulls. In my opinion, they aren't that different from the Big Smiles guild.

'This bitch has no knowledge about this game.'



Hatch was busily critiquing the live reactions. In a flash, he was having fun watching the Raid.

‘Big K is better than I thought. He is someone worth paying attention to.’

At some point, Hatch started to eat a snack.

However, when the fight with Agardo was about to start, Hatch’s expression changed immediately.

“Huhk!”

Hatch stood up from his seat. Surprisingly, there were a lot of Users showing a similar reaction.

12.

After the Primary Raid Team was inserted into the castle, the Tankers created space as they lined up as if they were imitating a castle wall. When this space was made, the other teams entered. If one looked down at Havanz castle from the sky, one would see something akin to a red inkblot spreading out on a black piece of paper.

Finally, the Red Bulls’ full force started to overwhelm the forces of the Corrupted army.





[Argardo has appeared.]

The White-eyed Knight had appeared.

The black spot was constantly moving on its silver armor, and the Crying Sword was letting out an endless cry. Argardo's appearance was intense. It had a small body, but it was letting out a more frightening energy than a dragon.

Everyone watching this live on the broadcast gulped. The chatting window was scrolling up endlessly as words were being typed.

Everyone had their mouths closed, and their hands had stopped moving.

In this silence, Chev opened his mouth.

“To the viewers watching this live broadcast, I want to apologize first.”

Everyone tilted their head in confusion. Question marks started to fill the chatting window.

“The Red Bulls guild took an easy way out in the Argardo Raid.”

There were a lot of questions being asked.



“The Red Bulls guild will give up the battle opportunity to someone else.”

The number of questions being typed were reaching a climax when the question marks started changing into exclamation marks.

“The Hahoe Mask is going to fight 1on1 with Agardo.”

When he saw Sinclair, Hyrkan became conflicted. Was there really a way where he would be able to participate in the Argardo Raid without any interference from Sinclair?

In truth, he didn't really have to rack his brain to come up with a method. There was one solution available to him. There were guilds that Sinclair couldn't interfere with. These guilds had too much power behind it. Sinclair wouldn't even be able to breathe on them. At the same time, these guilds would treat this Argardo Raid like it was a life and death issue. He had a choice of working with one of them, and he only had two guilds he could choose from. He didn't even need to think about it. Hyrkan went looking for Chev. They met in secret as no one else in the world was aware of this meeting.

Hyrkan gave a proposal.

“I want to participate in the Agardo Raid on a condition.”



“What’s the price?”

“I won’t ask for any rights to the profit gained from the live ticket and the pay per view videos.”

He just wanted to fight Agardo.

Normally, if a normal User had suggested this, Chev wouldn’t even acknowledge that User.

However, the one giving this request was the Hahoe Mask.

“I’ll make a decision after I hear these conditions.”

There was no reason to give an immediate rejection.

“You have to provide a 1on1 stage for me in the Argardo Raid.”

“So you want us to take care of the Corrupted army for you?”

“Instead, I’ll tell you of a way to kill Agardo. It won’t be a sure-fire method, but I’ll let you borrow a tool that’ll allow you to pull off this method.”

Hyrkan’s proposal was an attractive proposal. In truth, Chev had already made a decision to accept Hyrkan’s proposal.



‘It’s a choice between gaining more profit or gaining less profit.’

This was somewhat of a happy dilemma for Chev.

If Hyrkan failed at the Argardo Raid, the next one to fight it was the Red Bulls. If Hyrkan was able to take down Argardo’s HP into the reds, Argardo would be a fish in troubled waters. Even if that wasn’t the case, Hyrkan’s failure could be a teaching moment. It was a scenario where the Red Bulls would be able to get the most profit.

Even if Hyrkan was able to succeed in the Argardo Raid, it wasn’t as if they would lose anything. The benefit of defeating Argardo would go to Hyrkan, but the title gained from completing the Raid would be shared by everyone in Red Bulls. Moreover, all the profit gained from the footage of the Argardo Raid would all go to the Red Bulls. Hyrkan would be in the footage... It was going to be a massive amount of profit.

Above all, the Red Bulls guild had a debt accrued against Hyrkan. In truth, the Red Bulls, Stormhunters and the Hydra guild had come together to prepare a very big present. They had wanted to bribe him. However, it seemed that present was unnecessary now.

If this was a proposal given by Chev, Chev would have agreed to everything.

However, this was a request made by Hyrkan to the Red Bulls.



“I don’t think that’ll be enough.”

“What’s your counter proposal? I’ll hear it out.”

“I want full rights to the live broadcast. I want you to give me the rights to be able to show your battle on our live channel. Then I’ll provide the best stage for a 1on1 battle.”

Instead of an answer, Hyrkan put forth his hand. Chev grasped Hyrkan’s hand.



## Chapter 129 – Argardo Raid (4)

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13.

Hyrkan looked forward through the small slits on the Hahoe Mask.

Argardo.

Before he returned to the past, he had only been able to see Argardo through videos. The White-eyed Knight looked awe-inspiring as it looked at Hyrkan. Hyrkan also looked awe-inspiring as he looked at the White-eyed knight.

He had always wanted to create this scene.

Hyrkan wanted to be the only one fighting against Argardo. He had dreamed about getting all the glory and benefits from this fight.

However...

‘Shit.’

He had achieved what he had always wanted, yet Hyrkan wasn't feeling that great.

Was he feeling the pressure of meeting an indescribably powerful



enemy? Of course not.

If he was someone that wilted under pressure, he wouldn't have sought out the Red Bulls guild to set up a 1on1 stage.

He liked this stage. It didn't matter if he won or lost. This was the stage he had always pined for.

What he didn't like was the path he had to take to get to this stage.

Chev had given Hyrkan a proposal as they shook hands. Instead of a 1on1 battle, he wanted Hyrkan to work together with them on the Argardo Raid. It was a very reasonable and logical proposal.

However, when he received that proposal, his worthless pride that he had wanted to protect cracked.

'My pride really isn't worth anything, but I can't bring myself to do that.'

One could call it a moral victory. Maybe it was a form of self-pity. He couldn't dispute it if someone said his reasonings were fallacious.

However, Hyrkan wanted to fight Argardo by himself. He didn't want any help from one of the 30 great guilds during the battle.



‘If I get beat, then it was meant to be. It was fated.’

The death would be his comeuppance, yet at the same time, it would feel lame if he died. Since he had reached this point, he had to win. He had to make a pathetic deal to be able to get on this stage, yet if he couldn’t do anything here, the embarrassment he would feel wouldn’t allow him to put on his Hahoe Mask again.

“Hoo-ooh!”

In an instant, Hyrkan swallowed all the emotions he felt.

It was time to focus on the battle.

The opponent in front of his eyes was the second strongest NPC one could fight right now. The first was the Blacksmith Olf.

With such an enemy in front of him, he wouldn’t let the idle thoughts and remorse shackle his ankles.

Hyrkan pulled out his sword. If one pulled out one’s sword in front of a knight, it disclosed one’s hostility towards the knight.

Argardo didn’t have to unsheathe its sword, so it immediately closed the distance between it and Hyrkan.

Kah-ahng!



The sound of a harsh clanging of metal rang out. It was the first greeting between the two.

Then the greeting continued.

The sound of steel and bodies hitting each other was heard. At time, there was the sound of the air being split, but it was mostly a sound induced by Argardo on purpose. For the most part, Hyrkan didn't dodge the attacks. He met them head on. There was a great amount of force felt by Hyrkan every time they clashed. However, it wasn't as if there wasn't an underlying reason why he was doing this.

‘There is a big difference in Stats between us.’

He was getting a measure of his enemy.

When fighting a large monster, there's no User that is boorish enough to get into a battle of strength with it. However, it was a different story when fighting an NPC. Even if one wasn't engaging in a battle of strength, one had to get a rough measure of one's opponent.

What level of speed, power and reflex did the NPC have? Moreover, what level of AI did it possess?

If you know your enemy and yourself, you can win every battle. It wasn't some profound truth, but one couldn't ignore it.



Moreover, a skilled User like Hyrkan could measure his opponent in about one minute.

It was strong.

It was almost at a level where he was almost unable to fight against it in terms of strength.

This was why Hyrkan was satisfied with his choice of weapon.

‘As expected, Ivan was a better choice than the Black Cobra King.’

Currently, Hyrkan was using the Ivan’s Sword as his weapon.

Ivan had been a member of the Secret Society. However, he had been caught by the Immoral Prince’s madness. He had died in the midst of indescribable pain, and now Hyrkan was using a sword given to him before Ivan’s death . He was fighting Ivan’s enemy with it. It was incredibly dramatic.

Of course, this wasn’t the only reason why he had picked the Ivan’s Sword. Of course, Ivan’s Sword was inferior in terms of damage and offensive ability compared to the Cobalt King Sword. However, it had a No Destruction Option. It couldn’t be destroyed.

‘If I had the Black Cobalt King, it would have been totally smashed during the testing-out phase. As expected, the Crying Sword is annoying.’



When facing Argardo, it was mandatory to have an Item with a No Destruction Option. The Special Option on Argardo's Crying Sword was Break. It accelerated the destruction of weapons and armors.

At the same time, Ivan's Sword had another useful Option.

“Haste!”

The Item had a C Rank Haste Skill available as an Option.

Hyrkan decided to use that Option at that moment. Naturally, the speed of the battle caught fire. The gap between each sound of steel ringing out decreased. Of course, as the gap decreased, the margin of error decreased. Hyrkan and Argardo didn't have the luxury to pay attention to their surrounding.

‘Let's do this properly.’

Hyrkan was afforded a moment where he was able to summon the Skeleton Knight. It appeared fully equipped with its Bone Armor and Madness Helm on.

14.

While the guild members of Red Bulls were cleaning up the remnants of the Corrupted army, Chev was watching the battle



between Argardo and Hyrkan. He had to direct the battle, but he was neglecting his duties. However, there were no looks of condemnation directed towards him.

‘As expected of the Hahoe mask.’

It was worth watching the battle between the Hahoe Mask and Argardo.

The pincer attack between the Skeleton Knight and the Hahoe Mask was surprising. The Skeleton Knight’s AI was astounding in itself, but Hahoe Mask was in perfect sync with the Skeleton’s Battle AI. Hahoe Mask’s battle sense was astonishing.

‘The method on how Hahoe Mask grew his Skeleton underlings had been mostly figured out, but...’

The secret behind the outstanding Battle AI of the Skeleton Warriors possessed by the Hahoe Mask had already been mostly revealed. The Hahoe Mask’s Skeletons didn’t follow the conventional method of Defend First and Attack After. The Skeletons had learned the method of Evade First, and Attack After. It had learned how to evade. If one looked at Hahoe Mask’s Character Growth Style, one could pretty much deduce some of the answers.

‘However, no one can fight like the Hahoe Mask.’

Even if one was able to train the Skeleton underlings like the



Hahoe Mask, it was impossible to fight like him.

This battle was the proof.

On the other hand, this tag team approach from the Hahoe Mask and Skeleton Knight wasn't producing any result.

This was the reason why Chev's eyes narrowed as he watched the battle.

'It'll be useless to summon additional Skeletons.'

Currently, the Hahoe Mask had only summoned his Skeleton Knight. If one considered the over 20 Skeleton Warriors and Golem he could summon, the Hahoe Mask had a very powerful force at his disposal.

However, even if he did summon the rest, it would be meaningless in this battle. This wasn't only true for the Hahoe Mask. Even if other Users attacked Argardo together, only two or maybe three would be able to attack it at once. It was impossible to send more into the fight even if one wanted to.

Even if Users clung to Argardo, it was hard to achieve any result. Argardo didn't take any damage from physical or magical attacks. In front of Argardo, Hyrkan and the Skeleton Knight could make sounds of attack, but there was no traces left behind on Argardo.

On the other hand, Argardo's Crying Sword was slowly leaving



its mark on the body of the Hahoe Mask and the Skeleton Knight.

If time passed as is, the result was obvious to see.

‘Hahoe Mask will use his winning move now.’

If the Hahoe Mask had something planned, he would have to do it now. This was why Chev narrowed his eyes as he watched the battle.

At that moment, Argardo’s Sword pierced through the Hahoe Mask’s stomach, and it exited through his back.

When everyone saw this sight, they let out a sigh.

On the other hand, Chev’s eyes narrowed further.

15.

The first one to kneel in this ceaseless battle was the Skeleton Knight. Argardo’s sword severed the Skeleton Knight’s two knees at the same time. No matter how great the Skeleton Knight is, it couldn’t continue to battle without its legs.

The Skeleton Knight had fallen.

Argardo and Hyrkan once again looked at each other.



At that moment, Hyrkan suddenly shifted his left arm in mid-air. It was a clear crack in his defense.

Swheeeek!

Argardo didn't miss the opportunity. It narrowed the distance as it aimed its sword towards Hyrkan's stomach.

Hyrkan was using Bone Armor, Items and Passive skills like Skin Sewing. His defense was incredible, but the combination of the Crying Sword's attack stats and its Special Option ruthlessly ignored everything in its path.

Pah-jeek!

His armor was pierced.

Pooh-oohk!

The flesh of Hyrkan's belly was pierced.

Pah-jeek!

The Crying Sword exited the stomach, and it once again pierced through the armor and Bone Armor on the other side.



The hand holding the sword was so close to Hyrkan's stomach that there was barely any distance between them. It was that deep of an attack.

At that moment, Hyrkan had a smile on his face. As he smiled, Hyrkan hugged Argardo.

At the same time, Hyrkan used that brief moment to change the scattered Skeleton Fragments into Skeleton Warriors.

After they formed, it could be seen that they weren't holding any weapons.

They were barehanded.

Of course, this didn't mean they couldn't attack.

While Hyrkan was impaled on Argardo's sword, he continued to hug Argardo as he flicked his finger. At that moment, the Skeleton Warriors ran in towards Argardo empty handed.

During all of this, Argardo wasn't struggling to escape from Hyrkan's grasp. Instead it kept moving the sword that was piercing Hyrkan's stomach.

Invincible.

Argardo couldn't be damaged by anything, so it didn't have to



pay attention to the new beings that was showing hostility towards him. In the end, Hyrkan was controlling the Skeletons, so it just needed to kill Hyrkan.

However, Hyrkan didn't easily show signs of weakness.

There was a reason why.

‘I finally benefit from the Life Vessel.’

Life Vessel was a Body Modification skill that drastically increased one's health.

Of course, Life Vessel wasn't a heal-all remedy. If the situation remained the same, Hyrkan would eventually die.

It was almost time to end this exchange.

In a flash, four Skeleton Warriors got close to Argardo. Their hands held nothing except the bones that composed their hands, and they started pounding on Argardo's armor. Then they grabbed his armor as if they were about to pull it apart.

Poohk!

Argardo still ignored the Skeleton Warriors, and it put more strength into the sword piercing Hyrkan's belly.



Choo-roong, choo-roohng!

The Crying Sword let out a cry as if it was happy.

At that moment...

Kwah-ah-ahng!

A thunderous roar engulfed Hyrkan and everything near him. It engulfed Hyrkan, Agardo and even the Skeleton Warriors!

Accompanying the explosion, a black liquid spread out as it covered Hyrkan and Agardo.

[Argardo was effected by the Black Sap.]

[It was exposed to the Black Sap. Your opponent's HP will decrease.]

The two Announcement tickled Hyrkan's eardrums.

On top of it all, it seemed Argardo must have realized something was wrong. Argardo kicked him as it distanced itself from Hyrkan.

Pooh-hwaht!



In the process, the sword was roughly pulled out of Hyrkan, and the sword grated itself against the wound.

If this was reality, it wouldn't have been strange for Hyrkan to let out a scream.

However, Hyrkan spoke in a low voice as he smiled instead of letting out a scream.

“Slot on.”

16.

He had only one aim.

Black Sap!

It didn't matter how impressive one's physical and magical defense was. It was useless against the Black Sap's fixed damage done over time.

Hyrkan wasn't the only one, who had come up with this method. The members of the Red Bulls and the Storm Hunters were all wearing Items that would ignore the opponent's defense. They were wearing Items that had the Option of causing damage over time. They had determined this was the way they'll clear the Argardo raid. However, these Items worked only when the Armor came off. The Black Sap was different from those Items. The Armor Break was unnecessary. Argardo's armor was invincible,



but it couldn't keep liquid out.

This was why Hyrkan had placed the Skeleton Warriors equipped with the Black Tree set nearby. Then the Skeleton Warriors were detonated using a Bone Explosive. This battle scenario was all put together to achieve this.

Of course, if this scenario was carried out, Hyrkan would also be drenched in the Black Sap.

“Slot on.”

This was why he had prepared the Circlet of Purification and the Skeleton Panda set.

[The Circlet of Purification is protecting you from the Black Sap.]

The Black Sap that was covering Hyrkan let out a foul smell before it evaporated into smoke.

On the other hand, no smoke emanated from Argardo's body. It basically meant that the Black Sap was still there. Since the Black Sap was still present, it would continuously drain Argardo's HP.

‘The Black Sap damages at a fixed rate, and if I consider the estimated HP Argardo has.... At the very least, I need 20 minutes.’



Agardo had an enormous amount of HP. One couldn't expect the Black Sap to produce result in only couple minutes.

If his estimates were right, he needed at least 20 minutes.

He'll see the HP bottom out only after that amount of time had passed.

On top of it all, Argardo and any monster in Warlord had a characteristic they had all in common. While not in battle, their health regenerated rapidly, and the Abnormal Statuses reset after a certain amount of time.

Basically, Hyrkan had to battle Argardo for several dozen minutes. Moreover, every time the HP is reduced, Argardo would enter into a new phase where its ability and Skills would be used in a terrifying manner. Hyrkan had to solo such an opponent.

There was a really long way to go.

Even if he asked for help, no one would have blamed or disparaged him.

However, Hyrkan didn't ask for anyone's help. He didn't even intend to buy time by going on defense.

Attack is the best form of defense!



Moreover, Hyrkan had a battle strategy that was well suited to this stage.

While engaged with Argardo, Hyrkan scattered the Skeleton Fragments. He had scattered the Skeleton Fragments for neither the Skeleton Warriors nor the Skeleton Knight.

It was the Skeleton Magicians.

‘I’ll finish it with the Waltz.’

Corrupted Comrade Ivan.

It was time for Hyrkan to dance for him.

17.

Waltz.

It sprung Hahoe Mask into super-stardom. He once again did the Waltz except the stage was located at the Havanz Castle.

The Hahoe Mask displayed his masterful skills as Argardo continued to attack him. He was luring Argardo into locations where the Skeleton Magicians were throwing their magic.



Of course, the magic didn't cause any damage, but it was sufficient enough to distract Argardo. This was a fight against time, and anything that occupied Argardo was worth its weight in gold. No, it was more valuable.

Everything was going well up until that point. The viewers watching this footage live was in a fevered pitch. They were going nuts. Moreover, the live tickets were being continuously sold as the battle continued, and the number of people, who purchased the live tickets, broke through the 2 million mark.

It was very rare for people to purchase live tickets during a live broadcast. Moreover, this was the first time anyone had sold hundreds of thousands of live tickets during a broadcast.

This was a historic event that would last forever in the lore of Warlord.

However, as the Waltz progressed, the more astute viewer started to furrow their eyebrows. The viewers that didn't like the Hahoe Mask started to smile, and the viewers that liked the Hahoe Mask started to frown.

‘The Hahoe Mask is being pushed back.’

In Shir's case, she had no expression on her face. She had two feelings...

Hyrkan had refused her love call, yet he kept answering



consecutive love calls from the Red Bulls. She felt hatred towards him. On the other hand, he was like an expensive jewel that she couldn't have, so she felt an affection for him. Shir didn't have the ability to display these two emotions at the same time.

Anyways, it had been 7 minutes, since he started the dance. In Shir's opinion, he was starting to waver.

There was a reason why this was happening.

Argardo had entered its 2nd Phase, and its attacks had changed. Its attack speed hadn't changed. Instead of speed, its attack style had changed.

Up until now, Argardo's attack had been very controlled in its attack, and now the attacks were getting rougher.

Hyrkan was trying to dance the Waltz, yet the opponent danced the Tango. Of course, a decent dance wouldn't arise from it.

Hyrkan finally reached the 18 minutes mark, since he started to dance the Waltz. It was at this point when Argardo went into its 3rd Phase. It started letting out Sword Energy, and Hyrkan's arm was severed. He didn't have time to reattach it. He needed a brief respite, so he summoned the Skeleton Warriors to form a defensive wall. However, this defensive wall didn't even last 10 seconds in front of Argardo's sword.

'The Red Bulls isn't stepping forward?'



This was a critical moment.

If the Red Bulls stepped forward, this crisis could be resolved into nothing.

“Hatch.”

– Yes.

“What about the Red Bulls?”

– They aren’t moving. Everyone is just watching.

However, the Red Bulls weren’t moving. Shir didn’t think this wasn’t the will of the Red Bulls.

This was the Hahoe Mask’s will.

He had set up the carpet with the help of the Red Bulls, but it seemed he wanted to fight alone on the main stage. He was expressing his will to die on the battlefield if it came to it, but he was determine to fight solo.

Shir thought the Hahoe Mask’s will was splendid.

He still fought on his own, so he wasn’t owned by anyone. She



was satisfied.

‘Still, he is in danger.’

This was why Shir wordlessly watched Hahoe Mask’s crisis.

Moreover, Chev also watched the sight without saying anything.

“Shouldn’t we help him? If we help him, Argardo will be....”

Chev spoke to his subordinate as he kept his eyes glued to the battlefield.

“He doesn’t want it, so wouldn’t it be absurd if we did step forward? Moreover, isn’t it best for us to wait for the Hahoe Mask to die?”

It was a very cold answer.

The subordinate, who asked the question, harbored a suspicion. The Hahoe Mask was held in the highest regard by Chev. At the same time, he knew Chev was a very fiery guy. He was someone that had to work on putting the guild’s profit first. A man like that wouldn’t give such a cold-hearted answer.

‘Does he not like something about the Hahoe Mask?’



It meant Chev's feelings had changed.

The change was centered around the Hahoe Mask.

'I really want him, but now that I see him fight... I feel jealous.'

Chev wanted the Hahoe Mask. The Hahoe Mask was like the famed sword stuck in a stone. If one could pull out and own the sword, it basically meant victory and glory would be given to the owner.

However, Chev was filled with jealousy right now as he looked at the Hahoe Mask.

Chev wanted to fight like him. No, he had fought like Hyrkan in the past. It was when the Red Bulls guild was still small, and profit gained by others wasn't dependent on Chev's shoulders and hands. Chev had fought like Hyrkan. He had often carried out reckless and foolhardy fights like him.

However, he couldn't do that any more.

This was why he felt jealous.

While Chev was brooding on his jealousy, time had passed, and the battle was drawing to a close.



‘It’s one thing after another.’

After he entered into the 3rd Phase, Argardo started to mix in his Sword Energy skill within his attacks. The concept of distance was meaningless now. Hyrkan had to evade even when the sword was swung from a distance.

At the same time, Argardo’s Stats increased by a significant margin after it entered into the 3rd Phase. The Stats it possessed didn’t allow for a direct confrontation.

‘Shit.’

In the end, the Hahoe Mask discarded the Ivan’s Sword. He just focused on dodging all of Argrado’s attack.

One could no longer see the Waltz in Hyrkan’s movements. He was just struggling to stay alive.

‘My reaction is slowing.’

There was another element that was tormenting Hyrkan during all of this. It was none other than the drop in his concentration.

He was fighting in the battle as he maintained extreme concentration for 20 minutes. It was inevitable, but he was reaching his limit. He hadn’t been in tiptop condition even before



the battle had started. If his physical condition deteriorated, it affected his game play. Hyrkan noticeably felt his body become dull.

‘Had I been too optimistic about this situation?’

The letters of death and defeat was starting to crystallize within Hyrkan’s head.

At the same time, Hyrkan could imagine all the members of the Red Bulls surrounding him.

If they helped Hyrkan right now, everything could end in a happily ever after. At the very least, he wouldn’t have to waste his time as he stared at the ceiling of his one room apartment for the next 48 hours.

Bbah-doohk!

The thought made Hyrkan grind his teeth again.

At that moment, he didn’t like the fact that he was thinking that way.

‘All right.’

The anger sharpened Hyrkan’s resolve.



‘I’ve died numerous times before, because of my lowly pride. There is no reason why I should start becoming afraid now.’

At that moment, Hyrkan took out his last bastion.

Golem Summon!

He didn’t use Clay Play. He simply summoned his Golem. He didn’t have time to even use Clay Play.

At the same time, Hyrkan hid behind the Golem. Instead of chasing after Hyrkan, Argardo took care of the Golem. Argardo raised its hand, and Hyrkan used a Skill.

“Hardening!”

The Golem’s body turned into stone.

At the same time, the white eyes within Argardo’s helm flashed as it aimed its sword towards the Golem.

Hyrkan stood still behind the Golem.

As he had said before, the Golem was his final bastion. If the Golem fell, he had nothing to hide behind.

Moreover, Hyrkan didn’t have enough energy to fight Argardo



again.

Argardo somehow had to die or else Hyrkan was fated to die.

If that was the case, he'd rather have the choice in how he would die.

“Come at me!”

Hyrkan used all the energy and feeling he had left inside the pit of his stomach to let out a yell.

The shout made the hearts of the viewers twitch. The words were scrolling up so fast that it was almost impossible to read the chatting window. However, at that moment, a brief silence fell over the messy chatting window.

At the same time, his yell was like a starting pistol that made Argardo move.

Shweeeek!

Argardo took a big swing towards the Golem, and the enormous Sword Energy cut the Golem diagonally in a flash.

Kwah-kwah-kwah!



The Sword Energy cut through the Golem, and it even brushed by Hyrkan's side. If Hyrkan was a couple feet to the side, Hyrkan's body would have been cut open like the Golem.

This was how the Golem bought Hyrkan several seconds.

Koo-goo-goohng!

When the Golem fell, the large noise and the smoke that was created bought him several more seconds.

However, that was it.

The final bastion wasn't really a bastion. However, Hyrkan wasn't disappointed. Even as the Golem fell, Hyrkan stood still. As the visibility improved, he looked at Argardo.

'Come at me.'

Hyrkan tightly held his final Bone Explosive in his right hand. He wasn't going to die in a lame way, and he wasn't going to give up. If Argardo used its Sword Energy, he was going to evade it then throw the Bone Explosive. The Bone Explosive wouldn't cause any damage. However, the explosion and smoke would buy him a little bit of time.

'Attack is the best form of defense.'



It would give Hyrkan time to close the distance, and he was going to kick Argardo's body.

From the beginning, Hyrkan had followed this adage, and there was no reason why he should veer away from it. If he wanted to win here, he had to become more aggressive in his attack.

Of course, if a mistake happened in the process, Hyrkan would be killed in an instant.

‘Come at me.’

Hyrkan squeezed out all this strength, and he regrouped his concentration as he pushed it to the extreme.

At that moment...

[You've gained the Title 'Defeater of Argardo'.]

[You've gained the Title 'Hero of the Great Battle'.]

When he heard the Announcement of the two Titles, it turned everything inside Hyrkan's head white.



# Chapter 130 – On The Eve (1)

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1.

This happened sometimes.

One saw something amazing, and one wanted to say something about this amazing sight. However, one couldn't come up with the words on the spot.

This was how several thousand watching the Havanz castle... No, millions of people were faced with such a situation. They couldn't immediately express the feeling they felt as they watched the sight in front of them. They could only let out a simple exclamation of admiration and acclamation.

Hyrkan was also part of this group.

'Uh. I caught it?'

He had been prepared for death. No, in truth, he had thought he was cooked. He had thought he was a loser that hadn't been able to last until the Black Sap's effect had entirely ate away at Argardo's HP. He had thought his death was well-deserved.

He even felt regret. Maybe he should have just shut both his eyes, and asked for Red Bulls' help. Who was going to look after his watch? Maybe, the Red Bulls guild would quickly eat it, then deny taking it? What will he do for the next 48 hours? Maybe he should



play game X...

Regrets would have started to fill his head.

If Hyrkan was someone that couldn't differentiate between game and reality, he would have probably kept thinking about it.

Currently, Argardo was dead, but it hadn't fallen. He had heard the Announcement in his ears. It was sufficient proof that the battle had ended. However, Argardo was standing straight as it pointed its sword at Hyrkan. It made Hyrkan wonder if he had misheard the announcement.

He didn't know why, but it felt as if he was going to cut down by Argardo's sword if he moved. The suspense didn't even allow Hyrkan to swallow his spit.

The one who should be celebrating the most in this victory was immersed in this suspense. Even the spectators watching this scene couldn't help it. The suspense created a sense of desolation, and they were having a hard time shaking off this feeling. The sense of desolation was like a fog that had descended in the morning.

The very first one to shake off this sense of desolation was Chev.

'He really did it.'

Chev was filled with complicated thoughts.



It had been clear that Hyrkan was inferior to Argardo. On the other hand, the thought of facing Argardo's attack made one's body shudder. It was frightening.

From afar, it seemed Argardo was still standing there looking unharmed.

However, he was sure this was over. The only thing left was the curtain call.

‘The Hahoe Mask defeated the White-eyed knight by himself.’

In other words, someone else had to give the curtain call. Chev used the Voice Talk to talk to the producer directing the live broadcast.

“Mic mode.”

– What? Ah, yes!

It seemed the producer had been in a daze too. However, he quickly came to his senses. This was still a live broadcast. If a PD lost control over his thoughts during a live broadcast, the consequences wouldn't end after sending in a report.

– Mic mode, 3, 2, 1. Start!



The producer immediately sent a signal to the sound team. The sound team made adjustments to the system so that Chev’s words would immediately be heard through the broadcast.

When the countdown ended, Chev opened his mouth.

“The Argardo hunt was a success. This was a production made possible by the Red Bulls. The Red Bulls guild and the Hahoe Mask was the participants. Thank you for watching our broadcast. We’ll see you soon through the credit cookie.”

The curtain descended on the stage.

Now the viewers wouldn’t be able to see the story that was about to occur on the other side of the curtain.

2.

Hyrkan accepted Argardo’s death when he received the Titles. He immediately check on the Titles after he acquired it.

[Hero of the Great Battle]  
– Title Effect : All Stats increase by 5%.

[Defeater of Argardo]  
– Title Effect : All Stats increase by 5%.



These two Titles were an explicit proof.

‘I really caught it.’

Hyrkan had caught Argardo. The Titles were a clear proof.

The death of Argardo put a period on the great battle.

Hyrkan was finally able to wipe the dazed look off of his face.

Hyrkan started to walk. Hyrkan lost his balance for a brief moment. He forgot he had temporarily lost the weight of an arm.

Hyrkan took a peek at his left arm. No, it was impossible to see his left arm. His left arm was missing. It had probably rolled away nearby, or maybe it had been crushed.

Of course, he didn’t need to worry about it. He just had to receive a regeneration magic from a priest nearby. It would grow back in 3 minutes.

‘Ah. Life Vessel.’

At that moment, Hyrkan realized he couldn’t receive the Regeneration magic. Once he activated the Life Vessel, a priest couldn’t use any recovery type magic on him. It was a form of penalty. The Regeneration was a recovery type magic.



Hyrkan took a peek at his HP status. Then he wordlessly put a Recovery Candy in his mouth. Once his Live Vessel skill was deactivated, he'll be at the brink of death. He might lose the life he had barely hung on to. That was how bad of a state he was in.

‘I almost died for real.’

Hyrkan rolled the candy around in his mouth, and a sweet smell emanated from his smile. He approached Argardo. Argardo was still standing still in the same location.

Hyrkan felt several types of emotions mingle inside his head and heart as he looked at Argardo.

First, he wanted to smack the back of Argardo's head with his hand. Of course, he wouldn't feel favorable towards someone that had tried to kill him. Above all else, he hadn't been able to land a single satisfying blow against Argardo. He had gained victory using the Black Sap. There wasn't much gratification from winning this way.

On one hand, he was proud of his victory against Argardo. On the other hand, he felt as if he should show his respect to the powerful knight he had fought.

Of course, it was merely an NPC within the game. Moreover, this NPC had not been kind to him. It was actually an NPC that had committed horrifying misdeeds in its past. It would be absurd to pay respects to it.



On top of it all, Hyrkan was very unlike the Users that insisted on romanticizing the game.

‘I wonder what Coyote or Whistling would have done if they were in my place.’

This was why Hyrkan did nothing. He just looked at Argardo with complicated emotions inside his heart.

However, the dead Argardo couldn’t feel his gaze.

Choo-roong, choo-roong!

It was as if Argardo’s sword had felt his gaze instead. It started letting out a cry towards Hyrkan. His shoulders had unconsciously given a big flinch when the sword let out a cry.

‘That gave me a fright.’

At the same time, Argardo’s body flinched. As the sword let out its cry, it started shaking the stiff body of Argardo. The vibration was small, but it started to spread like a ripple. In the end, it toppled over Argardo’s body.

Koohng!

Argardo finally got on his knee, then he fell forward.



Hyrkan watched this sight. The fallen Argardo had let go of his of his prized sword.

Hyrkan used his remaining arm to pick up Argardo’s prized possession. He picked up the Crying Sword.

[You cannot use this sword yet.]

The Announcement tickled his ears. It informed him he couldn’t use it yet.

Hyrkan ignored the Announcement.

“Item Option Check.”

He did something only he could do with this Item.

A hologram window immediately appeared in front of Hyrkan’s eyes.

[Crying Sword]  
\*Main Properties  
– Epic Rank Item



- All Stats +222

- Required Level : 180

\*Sub-properties

- The weapons and armors that receives an attack from the sword will rapidly lose its durability. The loss will be increased dramatically.

- When equipped, it will ignore 20% defense of all monsters

- When equipped, it will allow one to ignore 20% damage received

- When equipped, all damage is increased by 20%

- This Item is bound to the one that acquired it.

\*Miscellaneous

- Blacksmith Olf had reconstructed an ancient sword to make this sword. It will let out a cry if a hostile enemy is near the master. It protects the master of the sword.

It was more than a smile. The Option made him shudder from the thrill. This was better than the last weapon he used before he came to the past. In some ways, it was proof that he had already exceeded his past self.

Of course, Hyrkan didn't pay attention to those thought. The important part was the spoils of war.

The privilege of enjoying the spoils of war was only given to the winners.



At last, the vague word within his head was able to be crystallized in a recognizable word.

‘I’ll use this Item well.’

The word was victory.

3.

An explosion sometimes meant a release of pent up emotions.

The viewers hadn’t been able to say anything after the Hahoe Mask and Argardo finished their battle. In the process, their emotions had been building and coalescing. Now it started to explode.

– The Hahoe Mask really won? How?

– When will the Red Bulls release their strategy? What the hell did they do? Wasn’t the only direct damages done by the Bone Explosives?

– Black Sap. I guess it does DoT damage.

– ⊥ The Black Sap does DoT Damage? It feel like I’ve seen that somewhere before.



- ⊥ Isn't it from the Black Tree?
- ⊥ Black Tree? What is that?
- ⊥ It is Hahoe Mask debut pay-per-view video. It is really fun.
- Hahoe Mask is the best. Sulwoo may be the First One in the Rankings, but the Hahoe Mask is the First One in terms of fighting ability.

They weren't the only ones reacting in an intense manner.

“Request an interview from the Red Bulls! We have to get an interview before the others! Hurry! Get me that interview immediately!”

“If you are able to get an interview with the Hahoe Mask, you'll get one month paid vacation. Get it at any cost! We can't lose to the bastards from Fruit!”

The unexpected appearance of the Hahoe Mask allowed an unprecedented history to be written.

This wasn't the only historical event that had happened that day.

“What?”



– We sold 2,710,000 tickets.

“I’m pretty sure you got the number wrong. The number of ticket sold before the Raid started...”

– The number of tickets we sold increased precipitously when the Hahoe Mask joined the Argardo raid. We just got the official number. Truthfully, I’m also having a hard time believing it. Anyways, we achieved a new record. It is unfortunate that we weren’t able to reach the 3 million mark.

They had sold 2.71 million tickets.

They had broken the all-time record for the amount of live tickets sold in Warlord. Chev was the owner of the new record, and he let out a forced laugh.

‘There’s my jealousy towards the Hahoe Mask, and there are the several factors that make me regret my decision a little bit....’

He had been jealous of the Hahoe Mask in this battle, and he felt regret at losing out on the incredible rewards that would be given to the winner of the battle. Chev would be lying if he said these two emotions weren’t at the back of his mind.

However, at that moment, he forgot about the regret he had felt.

‘The sale of the paid videos will be quite significant.’



This wasn't the end of it. The Hahoe Mask had given up the rights to his cut as part of the deal.

Moreover...

'If we combine the live tickets that will be sold in the Immoral Prince Raid.....'

When he thought about the guaranteed profit in the future, Chev didn't smile any more. Instead, he put on a serious expression as he thought about it.

'As expected, I have to recruit the Hahoe Mask.'

At that moment, there was someone, who was having the same worry as Chev.

- Excuse me. What shall we do? Should we just pull back or should we send a message of congratulation to the Red Bulls? Ah. What about the Hahoe Mask....

Shir was thinking so hard that Hatch's report wasn't registering in her head.

'In the end, he didn't ask for help from the Red Bulls.'

Of course, the Hahoe Mask was the source of her troubled



thoughts.

Her stomach had been beyond the point of aching when the Hahoe Mask worked with the Red Bulls. She wanted to destroy both of them as her insides churned.

However, in the end, the Hahoe Mask hadn't received help from the Red Bulls even when he was in a desperate situation.

This was why Shir hadn't exploded. This was why she was still deep within her thoughts.

‘Why?’

At the very least, one thing was for sure now. It wasn't as if the Red Bulls hadn't wanted to help the Hahoe Mask. It didn't matter if the Red Bulls guild would be giving out a favor or go under debt. There was no downside in helping out the Hahoe Mask.

However, in end, the Hahoe Mask wanted to fight by himself even in a desperate situation. The decision was of his own will. He did receive help from the Red Bulls, but his will was to fight Argardo by himself.

‘Why is he so insistent on soloing?’

She had a hard time understanding his will to solo. Normally, it was better to cooperate to get the sure result. This was the logical and common sense approach.



The Hahoe Mask was a very unique existence, but he wasn't someone who was absurdly illogical and unreasonable.

The insistence on soloing everything was illogical and irrational.

Of course, there was a reason behind his actions. In other words, she had to find out and resolve this reason. It was the only way she'll be able to possess the Hahoe Mask.

'I'll die before I let him be possessed by someone else.'

Shir kept brooding over her troubles.

– Excuse me, Queen? Are you listening to me, Queen?

Hatch once again tried to speak to Shir. Shir's expression crumpled.

"You are being noisy."

There was nothing more annoying than someone yapping through the Voice Talk, while she was thinking.

Moreover, disturbing Shir was a much scarier proposition than disturbing a lion.



– No, that's not....

Of course, Hatch was aware of this fact. However, Hatch once again disturbed Shir. The expression on Shir's face disappeared. She was expressionless. This was the expression she put on when her annoyance had reached its peak.

Of course, Hatch couldn't see her expression, but he caught wind of it. He couldn't even hear her breathe.

Even so, Hatch spoke to her again.

– Bracelet. Bracelet! Look at the Bracelet!

Shir looked at her own Bracelet instead of getting angry.



## Chapter 131 – On The Eve (2)

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4.

He filled the plain plastic bowl with the cloudy congee. Steam rose from the top. It really was apt to call it cloudy, since it was hard to find any bits of meat in it.

Ahn-jaehyun used his spoon to stir his thick congee. Every time he stirred it steam escaped from the congee. The steam fogged up Ahn-jaehyun's glasses. Ahn-jaehyun had a sullen expression as he left the spoon in his congee, and he turned his head.

When he turned his head, Ahn-jaehyun could see the slim tablet PC across his fogged up glasses. Ahn-jaehyun grabbed the tablet PC, and he tapped twice on the LCD screen as if he was knocking. The LCD screen glowed brightly.

[Great Battle. Eventually, it turned into their festival.]

[The new Users can't participate in the Main Scenario Quest. Is this really ok?]

[Is an event being planned for the new Users or is it not possible to make it happen?]

The headline of the articles dropped down like a shower. It was opinion pieces from game experts regarding the great battle event. One didn't even need to check the content of the articles. One



could easily tell from the headlines that the opinions were very current. Ahn-jaehyun swiped the screen.

[Red Bulls. They are opening the new era of live broadcasts.]

[Red Bulls. Thirty Thousand people purchased the Argardo Raid footage in just one day!]

[Red Bulls. Will they collaborate with the Hahoe Mask in the Immoral Prince Raid?!]

[Red bulls. The commercial spots for the Immoral Prince Raid's live broadcast is sold out!]

When he changed the screen, the headlines once again appeared.

“Ooh ooh.....”

At that moment, a moan escaped Ahn-jaehyun's mouth. It was a sound hear when you hear about your cousin buying land. Ahn-jaehyun had gained an enormous amount of profit in the great battle.

First, he gained the Crying Sword. It was a level 180 Chronicle Epic Rank Item. Currently, it was the best weapon one could find in Warlord. When talking about his gains, one couldn't forget about the Black Spot set that Argardo had worn.



He had gained two Titles that increases All Stats by 5%. Soon, he'll receive the main ingredients to the Great Battle Hero Weapon. Moreover, the Great Battle Hero Weapon became bound when manufactured, but the required main ingredients could be traded. The Option of the Items weren't revealed yet, but the ingredients were already priced at hundred thousand gold. An incredible market price was set.

There were a lot of stuff he'll gain in the future. He'll be able to get the Arbiter of Corruption Title and Arbiter of Corrupt accessories from just participating in the Immoral Prince Raid. If he was able to gain the Immoral Prince set, he would have earned everything he could in regards to the second Main Scenario Quest.

'I did the work, yet the money was made by the cows.'

However, Ahn-jaehyun's profit couldn't even be compared to the profit gained by the Red Bulls from the great battle.

At that moment, he thought about the conversation he had with Chev. Chev had approached him with his severed left arm, and it wasn't too hard to recall that conversation. As Chev handed over the left arm to the Hahoe Mask, he spoke just two sentences.

"Thank you."

That was the first words he spoke.

"I work forward to working with you next time."



Those words....

Chev only said those two sentences.

At first, Hyrkan didn't understand why Chev had said those words to him. From the perspective of the Red Bulls guild, it would have been best if the Hahoe Mask barely failed the Argardo Raid at the end. Moreover, the Items that can be earned in the Argardo Raid wasn't just any Item. It was arguably the best Item one could possess compared to all the Items that had released up until now.

When he finally found out about how many live tickets were sold by the Red Bulls, Ahn-jaehyun felt an indescribable pain inside.

‘Ten percent..... No, I should have at asked for 5%.’

The live ticket for the Red Bulls' Argardo Raid was priced at 5 dollars. They had sold close to 3 million tickets. There was a consensus in opinion that the Hahoe Mask was responsible for the sale of 1 million tickets. Moreover, the Red Bulls were bringing in remarkable numbers in terms of people purchasing the paid video of the Argardo Raid.

If he was able to received 10% of the profit generated by the live tickets and the paid video... No, even if it was the 5% Ahn-jaehyun wanted, he would have....

“I must have lost my mind.”



Ahn-jaehyun blamed himself for not being able to estimate the money that would have been generated by the Argardo Raid.

Moreover, this wasn't the end of it. Ahn-jaehyun had also handed over all the rights to his profit from the live broadcast of the Immoral Prince Raid to the Red Bulls.

This was the reason why he was eating this cloudy congee instead of a delicious meal. He wasn't eating congee, because he was out of money.

His insides were hurting, so he decided to heat up the congee he bought a long time ago. His insides couldn't take anything other than the congee right now.

Of course, Red Bulls' profit wasn't the only problem that was making his insides hurt. The Argardo Raid's affected him much more. He had spent an enormous amount of capital on the battle. Various stress started to pile on each other, and at the same time, he had pushed himself to the edge for the great battle. After it was done, he unconsciously let go of the tension he had been feeling.

He was quite fortunate that his internal pain could be lessened by eating the congee. Since he could eat the the congee, it meant there wasn't a hole in his Gastrointestinal walls.

‘Shit.’



Of course, this fact didn't give too much solace to Ahn-jaehyun.

Ahn-jaehyun was finally able to eat the congee after it cooled to a sufficient temperature. There wasn't much flavor to the congee. There was no taste, and there was no texture to it. He had bought it in the past when the mart sold it for cheap. He had bought it as an emergency provision, so it would be strange to expect any flavor from it.

Moreover, he didn't have the luxury to enjoy the taste of the congee. The back of his mind was full.

‘It isn't as if I can renege on the contract.’

When he made the contract with the Red Bulls, he hadn't made a verbal contract. He had to put an electronic signature on an actual contract. It was impossible for him to renege on the contract. Even if he did renege on the contract, Ahn-jaehyun didn't have many choices.

Let's assume he did stop cooperating with the Red Bulls. The only other guilds Ahn-jaehyun could work with was the Hydra guild and the Stormhunters guild. In the end, he would have to make similar agreements to the one he made with the Red Bulls guild.

Eventually, he would have to make a sorry decision again.

‘This damn pride of mine.’



Ahn-jaehyun didn't reminisce over his past. He was already bitter inside, and there was no reason why he should add something more bitter on top of it.

Ahn-jaehyun forced himself to think about a different subject.

‘Since it turned out this way, I’ll have to eat all the benefits that could be gained from the Immoral Prince.’

Since he had arrived up to this point, he had to gain everything that could be gained through the Immoral Prince.

The key point in the Immoral Prince Raid was that the Immoral Prince set was given to the 10 most accomplished Users. If he could gain that Item, it would basically mean he earned all the important Items he could earn.

Moreover, if he looked at his current situation, there was a very high probability that Ahn-jaehyun would gain the Immoral Prince set.

Ahn-jaehyun had displayed his battle ability in the Argardo Raid. He wouldn't be found lacking even if he was compare to the top Strikers representing Warlord.

Moreover, the Red Bulls will put Ahn-jaehyun in the forefront from now on. The Red Bulls hadn't officially revealed the agreement reached with Ahn-jaehyun, but they had already spread the rumors.



This was evidenced by the commercial spots for the Red Bulls' live broadcast of the Immoral Prince Raid was sold out.

In other words, Red Bulls had to give Ahn-jaehyun the opportunity to stand in the forefront. They had no choice, but to prepare stages where Ahn-jaehyun would be able to showcase his skills.

The problem was the Immoral Prince in itself.

‘The First Kill will be impossible.’

Five times.

Before he returned to the past, the Immoral Prince Raid failed 5 times.

The reason behind the failure was complex. The first problem was the participants of the Immoral Raid. Ninety percent of the Users possessing the Battle Tokens were part of the 30 great guilds. Of course, the 30 great guilds didn't collaborate with each other. Even if they did collaborate, it was a collaboration between two guilds at most.

Also, at the time, the 30 great guilds swept through the stage of the great battle with great impunity. They had been full of confidence, and at the time, luck was very much on their side when they finished the Argardo raid without much difficulty.



This was why the 30 great guilds didn't treat the Immoral Prince as the summit of an mountain. They looked at it as if it was a cherry placed on top of an ice cream.

The 30 great guilds couldn't help, but underestimate the Immoral Prince. Moreover, the eyes of the guilds had turned red from coveting the cherry. In the end, their confidence turned into conceit, and everything turned into a mess.

‘A failed Raid means annihilation.’

On top of it all, when one failed at the Immoral Raid, the entire group that had participated was annihilated. The stage of the Immoral Prince was fought like an Instance Dungeon, so it didn't allow for any retreat.

So what would happen this time around?

‘The current situation is better, but.....’

The situation before he returned to the past and the current events were very different. No one was underestimating the Immoral prince right now. However, this didn't guarantee that the 3 guilds with the most Battle Tokens would cooperate with each other. Ahn-jaehyun didn't know the inner workings of the 3 guilds.

In fact, even if everyone decided to cooperate, Ahn-jaehyun's current battle ability was also important.



If Ahn-jaehyun hadn't been successful at soloing Argardo, he would have fought as is. There wouldn't have been any basis for his worries.

‘In the end, I have to look out for my own life.’

However, he had succeeded in soloing Argardo, so his situation had changed a little bit. Ahn-jaehyun had acquired a new card.

‘My level is 173 right now.’

Once he reached level 180, he would equip the Crying Sword and the Dark Spot set. Moreover, it wouldn't be of much help in the Immoral Prince Raid, but he would gain the Fire Golem Skill when he reached level 180.

Basically, if he was able to raise 7 levels, his survivability and success rate in the Immoral Prince Raid would be much improved. It would drastically increase his chance of getting the Immoral Prince set. Of course, the rest of the members with the Battle Tokens wouldn't wait for Ahn-jaehyun to better himself for his own profit.

‘Hmmm.’

At that moment, Ahn-jaehyun's expression changed. The congee hadn't helped, but another thought allowed him to put a relaxed expression on his face.



‘If the Red Bulls pull out, the probability of the other two guilds cooperating will decrease. The Red Bulls guild is currently advertising their live broadcast through my fame. It is unlikely they’ll do the Raid until I step forward. Uh?’

At that moment, he recalled something. Ahn-jaehyun quickly used his tablet PC to bring up his contract with the Red bulls. The content of the contract wasn’t overly complicated. It only spelled out the important points.

‘Would you look at this?’

This was why it didn’t specify when he had to participate in the Immoral Prince Raid. There was no provision included in there.

At that moment, a smile formed on Ahn-jaehyun’s lips.

‘Shall I get on an express bus?’

At the same time, Ahn-jaehyun furrowed his brows.

‘Why is this congee so tasteless? It’s suppose to be beef congee, yet why don’t I see the beef?’

Ahn-jaehyun finally could taste the congee.



The pub was very popular in Warlord. First, one could enjoy the unique taste of very cheap food and alcohol. One could drink as many alcoholic beverage, yet one will never get a hangover. Of course, one couldn't get drunk too.

This was the reason why two Users were having a conversation with Melon Beer in front of them.

“What do you think will happen from here on out?”

“What are you talking about?”

No one was paying any interest to the conversation between the two. They weren't anything special. Their faces weren't that of famous Users. Moreover, the scene they were creating wasn't that special of a sight.

Of course, if their levels were shown above their heads, they wouldn't be able have a conversation in the pub, since an avalanche of gazes and interests would be focused on them. They wouldn't have even been able to enter the pub.

Sinclair and Horus was part of the Hands guilds. If you combined their levels, they were easily above level 400.

Of course, this didn't mean high level Users didn't have any worries.



“I think we were wrong to buy more time. Our plans went sideways.”

Sinclair frowned. It wasn't a frivolous worry. He was speaking a genuine worry.

This was why Horus seriously listened to Sinclair's worries.

“I wouldn't say it went sideways. It just revealed our limit.”

“Limit?”

Horus avoided giving a prompt answer, so he took a deep pull from the Melon Beer. He downed the entire cup.

“It's the limit to our method.”

“Isn't it a bit of an overreaction to talk about our limit? In truth, if the Hahoe Mask hadn't appeared...”

“Even if the Hahoe Mask hadn't appeared, the result wouldn't be too different from now. The Argardo Raid would have been resolved between the Red Bulls and the Storm Hunters.”

“Wasn't it because of the Hahoe Mask that the 30 great guilds participated in the great battle?”



“That is a separate issue from the Argardo Raid. Argardo Raid wasn’t a defensive siege. It was a siege to take over a castle.”

Sinclair shut his mouth as he heard the other’s words. It seemed Sinclair decided to keep his mouth shut regarding the issue, so he started downing his Melon Beer.

Horus didn’t look at Sinclair. He looked around his surrounding. No one should know their identities, but there was no downside in being careful.

Koohng!

Eventually Sinclair lightly tapped his beer glass on the table. Horus took this as a signal, and he opened his mouth.

“In the end, we lost to the Hydra guild in terms of information gathering again. Our plan had already failed from that aspect. Moreover, aren’t we pretty sure the Hydra guild won over the Red Bulls and Stormhunters to their side?”

“It isn’t confirmed yet.”

“It doesn’t matter if it’s not confirmed. It just shows the limit to our activities. Lets just say for conversation sake that the Hydra, Red Bulls and Stormhunters are working together. Then will they have a need for the Hands?”

Sinclair shook his head from side to side.



“Then from now on.....”

“Hey, Sinclair.”

Horus cut off Sinclair’s words in an instant.

“Don’t you dare tell anyone that I said this. I consider you a friend first, and a fellow employee second.”

Sinclair immediately nodded his head. The two of them discreetly leaned closer to each other towards the center of the table. The distance between them decreased by a little bit.

“Soon, there will be a reorganization in our guild.”

“Reorganization?”

“Our method of operation isn’t working any more. Is there a reason why we should continue as is?”

“How will it be reorganized?”

“We have to come out as a rival horse. We have to be a rival that could pull at the tail of the front-runners.”

“A rival horse?”



“I’m saying the time where we pulled the strings from background is coming to an end. I’m sure several of us are going to debut soon. No, I can already tell it will be so. If you look at our recent scope of activity, we are working more in the sunlight than the shade.”

Koong!

At that moment, Horus’ fist lightly tapped the table. Sinclair slightly shrugged his shoulder.

Horus spoke in a lower voice towards the slightly surprised Sinclair.

“Our chance has finally come. In truth, the Users who are lower in level and skills are being treated like celebrities. It isn’t as if we can’t continue on like this until the game ends. Regardless of what happens, I’m heading out into the sun. That is why..... There are several of us, who share similar thoughts.”

At those words, Sinclair started to touch his lips.

“Could you tell me who they are?”

It was an attempt to keep the smile off his face.



## Chapter 132 – On The Eve (3)

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6.

[You level has increased.]

When he succeeded in leveling up, Hyrkan reached into the small pouch hanging from his waist. He took out 5 Skeleton Fragments, and he threw it over his back. The Skeleton Fragments rolled across the floor like acorns, and they immediately changed into Skeleton Magicians wearing gray robes.

After the Skeleton Magicians formed, they gathered their hands. An emaciated flame started to form between their hands. The Skeleton Magicians moved their hands as if they were caressing it. As if to reward their attention, the fireballs started to expand. The fireballs, which had been the size of a child's fist, was suddenly the size of a man's head. At that moment, the Skeleton Magicians immediately threw their fireballs.

Hwah-roo-rooh!

The five fireballs flew in an arc. At the end of the arc, there was a battle going on.

Ggah-ahng, kah-ahng!



The sound of steel striking was endless. It was very easy to differentiate between the two groups that was fighting. The contrast was stark.

One side was composed of Skeleton Warriors with horns on their head. They were wearing an armor that was made out of black colored barks. On the other side, one could see adequately armored humanoid lizards that had black feathers coming off their hides. They were the Black Grooming Lizard Warriors

The battle between the Skeleton Warriors and the Grooming Lizards were fierce and closely contested. The two groups were so close to each other that a mumble could be heard by the other side.

Five enormous fireball fell into the battlefield. Of course, the fireballs didn't differentiate between enemies and allies.

Puh-uhng, puh-uhng.

The five consecutive sound of explosions swept across the battlefield. The black feathers of the Grooming Lizards started to burn, and the Skeleton Warriors started to let out black colored blood.

[Black Grooming Lizard Warriors were affected by the Black Sap.]



The Black Tree set's effect had been activated.

At the same time, the Skeleton Warriors immediately regained their original form. They regained their original imposing form, and one couldn't see any trace of magical damage on them.

On the other hand, the Grooming Lizard Warriors looked unseemly from the effects of the magical attack. Their feathers were burning, and the Black Sap clinging to them were quickly diminishing their HP.

Sha-ah! Shah-ah!

The bloody cry came out out of the Grooming Lizards' mouth. It wasn't a threatening cry. It was most definitely a cry filled with pain. Even this didn't last long. A Skeleton Knight appeared with the Black Cobalt King's sword in front of it, and its presence shut the mouths of the Grooming Lizards. The Grooming Lizards were so tense that they didn't even attempt to quench the flame sticking to their hide.

The Skeleton Knight didn't let out any sound. It just opened its mouth wide, and it pointed its sword towards the Grooming Lizard Warriors once. It let out a silent roar as it charged.

The explosions caused by the magic had created a state of lull on the battlefield, but the Skeleton Knight once again turned the stage into a pandemonium.



At that moment, Hyrkan wasn't looking at this sight. Hyrkan's gaze was to the left. In the distance, there was a User observing at Hyrkan.

“Where's the next location?”

The User immediately answered Hyrkan's question.

“We've already prepared it!”

This was the Black Grooming Lizard's nest. This was the exclusive hunting ground of the Red Bulls guild.

Warlord had level up support teams.

It was a very absurd concept. However, the 30 great guilds, the Underfoot guilds and any large guilds possessed level up support teams. Even some individuals possessed a personal level up team. The First One Sulwoo, who was ranked number 1 in Warlord's Level Ranking, was a prime example.

Of course, the role of a level up support team was to help a User increase their level.

The basic procedure was for the team to give material support. In truth, most decent sized guilds participated in doing this. They designated a fixed region as their main hunting ground, and the guild provided Items to guild members as needed as they hunted. By extension, there were also Buff teams that casted only Buff and



Healing magic. Then there were the Gathering teams that rounded up the monsters.

“I knew he was a monster, but I never knew what kind of a monster he was.”

Bower was the team leader of the Red Bulls guild's level up support team. He was basically the hidden trainer of the Red Bulls guild, and he was very experienced. At the same time, he was very close to Chev in real life.

He was a User affiliated with the Red Bulls, but he had realized he had no talent for this game early on. This was why he had helped out the Red Bulls with extrinsic matters, and this was how he was able to rise to his current position.

Currently, he was assisting the Hahoe Mask in leveling up.

– His hunting speed is amazing. It would take 5 minutes for a 3 man party to clear it, yet he is doing it in 3 minutes by himself. If we just talk in terms of efficiency, his hunting speed is about 5 times faster.

Of course, Bower wasn't the only one helping the Hahoe Mask.

The owner of the voice that had responded to Bower was named Ricky. He was a young 20 year old, who liked Warlord. It had only been two month, since they started to work together, so he was a beginner to all of this.



“He isn’t really 5 times faster, but his speed seems to on par with the First One.”

Ricky was a younger cousin of one of the Red Bulls guild’s officers. His work on the Support team was a temporary job he was doing to make some money on the side. He was also a big fan of the First One.

– Is he really comparable to the First One?

“In my opinion, he is faster than the First One.”

– What? No way.

This happened from time to time. Ricky had parachuted into the level up support team through his background, so he didn’t hesitate to disagree with his superior.

– The First One powered through level 220 yesterday. He now has a 15 level difference between the top 100! In truth, if you compare him to the Hahoe Mask, it is an insult to the First One.

Bower couldn’t help, but let out a bitter laugh at Ricky’s response.

‘If someone saw this, one would think he is my superior.’



Of course, he didn't like Ricky's reaction.

On the other hand, he understood Ricky's reaction. If one looked at Ricky's word from a normal User's perspective, he wasn't wrong.

First One was a speed demon at leveling up. No, he was something more than that. The proof was in his ranking.

Every Ranker within the top 100 tried to level up as if it was a life and death task. A single level difference was like a difference of 1 second in a 100 meter sprint. It was a very big difference.

Yet the First One was steadily creating a distance between the level 100 Ranked User and him.

Of course, Bower knew about this.

Bower had led the Red Bulls' level up support team from an early point in time. One of his duties was to find faster ways to level up, so he had researched the know hows of the Rankers. This was why Bower was much more knowledgeable about the First One than Ricky.

"All right. I spoke in error."

Of course, he wasn't going to argue with Ricky right now. He'll just secretly talk to Chev. He'll just tell Chev that Ricky is an asshole. Then Chev will handle the situation.



– The First One is the best.

Ricky had no idea about his fate, so he stubbornly restated his opinion. However, his tantrum didn't enter Bower's ears. Bower once again looked at the Hahoe Mask's battle footage.

In truth, he didn't need to assist the Hahoe Mask in leveling up. Bower wasn't just some simple trainer. He was like the the Daddy Long Legs of the primary raid team members in the Red Bulls guild. He had been supporting them since they were around level 20~30. Bower was like a big brother to all the experienced Users of the Red Bulls.

Even with such a status, he was given this task, because he was assigned to steal all of the Hahoe Mask's know how. He was tasked in stealing the Hahoe Mask's ridiculous hunting method, battle method and any other information that made him special.

‘He's faster than the First One.’

This was why he was confident in his answer. The Hahoe Mask's hunting speed was faster than the First One when the First One was at the same level as the Hahoe Mask.

‘However, the fights are too tight. He doesn't let up.’

At the same time, he could see the weakness of the Hahoe Mask. The Hahoe Mask fought urgently once he entered into a battle. He



had to stay focused throughout in order to finish the battle as fast as possible. This was a clear difference from the First One.

The First One varied the pace of a battle even during a battle. If he wanted to work fast, he could catch it in 5 minutes. However, he didn't overwork himself to catch it in 5 minutes. Instead, he hunted slowly to catch it in 10 minutes. It was a method used to delay the fatigue and loss of concentration that developed in battles. The First One used this method to notch an unprecedented amount of play time. He held the record.

His philosophy was the one who runs the longest beats the sprinter. He was the proof of this philosophy.

Basically, the Hahoe Mask was a mutation.

‘He’s dangerous.’

This was why it was dangerous. The Hahoe Mask had gone against the traditional method. He was using his method to narrow the distance between the First One and the high level Rankers.

It didn't matter if it was a small change or a big change. If the Hahoe Mask was able to rise into the level ranking, there will be a change in how things work. The Red Bulls was currently on the top of this existing order, so this change might work against them.

Bower was deep in his thought, and his face continued to harden.



– The Hahoe Mask requested for the Last Spot. He wants to know the region with the most monsters.

When Bower heard the voice of a manager helping out next to the Hahoe Mask, he relaxed his hardened expression.

7.

[Hyrkan]

– Level : 179

– Class : Necromancer

– Title : 144

–

Stats

:

Strength(2192)/Stamina(1132)/Intelligence(1327)/Magic Power(1601)

Ahn-jaehyun was checking the Hahoe Mask’s Character. There was a half empty pouch of a jelly drink hanging from his mouth. It was a drink with a difficult name. It was called the Smart Pouch.

Slurp!

Ahn-jaehyun quickly sucked the jelly out again, and the pouch shriveled up. He sucked on it until not a single drop of liquid was coming out. Ahn-jaehyun furrowed his brows.



‘I only sucked on it couple times, yet it’s all gone?’

Ahn-jaehyun took the pouch out of his mouth, and he haphazardly tossed it on top of the table. There were three emaciated packs on the table. If one looked a little to the side, there was a black bag with countless emaciated pouches placed in it.

It was a meal replacement jelly made for patients, who were having a hard time digesting food. This was Ahn-jaehyun’s main meal.

‘It is really expensive, tasteless and small in quantity.... Shit. What the hell am I doing?’

After the Argardo Raid, Ahn-jaehyun’s insides hadn’t calmed down, and he was still in a bad state.

He had went to the hospital, and a gastroscopy was done. The doctor told him there wasn’t any big problems with him, but he may be suffering from a digestive problem. As a precaution, he was told to refrain from foods that may act as triggers. He was told to lessen his stress, and he was ordered to do physical activities on a regular schedule.

Of course, the only advice Ahn-jaehyun followed was to avoid eating food that triggered his condition. That was the only one.

Instead, Ahn-jaehyun played on a more tighter schedule than usual. He had no choice.



‘I just need to jump one more level to reach level 180.’

He had negotiated with the Red Bulls. To be precise, he blackmailed them.

He sent a one-sided message saying he won't participate in the Immoral Prince Raid until he reached level 180. The Red Bulls had used the Hahoe Mask's name to sell commercial spots in the live broadcast, so they couldn't just overlook his message.

In the end, Red Bulls had to reveal a spot that wasn't even revealed to the masses yet. They allowed Ahn-jaehyun to use the Black Grooming Lizard's nest as his hunting ground. They even attached a level up support team to him. This was why everything else other than the actual act of hunting was all provided for by the Red Bulls. They didn't hesitate to provide him with consumable Items.

This was a chance that might never come again. His insides were hurting, but he couldn't pass by this opportunity.

‘After I finish my level up, I'll be going into the Immoral Prince Raid immediately. I have to raise my conditioning as much as possible before that occurs.’

Since he was given this opportunity, Ahn-jaehyun had to be at the top of his game in the Immoral Prince Raid after he reaches level 180. It was probably too much to expect his insides to get better when he considered the various stress he was under.



‘Still, the events are coming along quite well.’

Fortunately, there hadn't been much chaos created by the Immoral Prince Raid yet. It wasn't as if no one had tried to defeat it. The normal users possessing the Battle Tokens allied with each other. They put together the hints given on the Battle Tokens to find the secret location where the Immoral Prince was hiding. Two attempts had been made on the Raid.

The result of these two attempts were very bleak.

[The Immoral Prince is unassailable! If the group doesn't achieve victory, the group is wiped out!]

[The strongest boss monster in history has appeared. What can be done to clear it?]

Wiped out!

If one was able to earn a Battle Token, one was a pretty skilled User in Warlord. However, these Users weren't able to have an active role against the Immoral Prince. None of them were even able to have a decent fight with the Immoral Prince.

This was how strong the Immoral Prince was. The footages of the battle with Immoral Prince was released. Even the Hydra, Stormhunters and Red Bulls guild didn't dare to attempt the Immoral Prince Raid rashly.



What more explanation was needed?

This was also the reason why the Red Bulls was helping the Hahoe Mask level up without any complaints. The participation of the Hahoe Mask in the Immoral Prince wasn't optional anymore. It was a necessity.

This didn't mean Ahn-jaehyun was thrilled with the situation.

‘This won't be easy.’

Before he returned to the past, he never experienced fighting the Immoral Prince. He hadn't dared to fight it. This was the first time he was contemplating a potential fight with the Immoral Prince after seeing the video. The fact that this would be his first experience made a chill run up his spine.

In truth, the clear method was very simple.

The Immoral Prince was strong because of the Power of Corruption. It was an ancient power that had been left behind by the Fallen Kingdom. Moreover, relics emitting this ancient power were hidden around the Immoral Prince. Of course, the Immoral Prince would lose significant amount of power every time one of these relics were destroyed.

In the end, the Immoral Prince Raid was about blocking the Immoral Prince, so it couldn't interfere with the Relic Destruction



Team.

The content was simple. However, it was hard to carry it out the plan.

‘It is much faster than expected.’

The biggest problem was its speed.

Up until now in Warlord, speed had been a User’s weapon. However, the speed showcased by the Immoral Prince was faster than any User.

Moreover, the type of skills used by the Immoral Prince was troublesome. His trigonal symbol represented Wisdom, Might and Mission. As someone that represented a symbol with these 3 meanings behind it, the Immoral Prince was able to use skills that was similar to the main skills of the Swordsman class and the Magician class.

In fact, the Immoral Prince’s skills were significantly more powerful than the skills used by the Users.

‘The Skills were strengthen using the Fallen Kingdom’s power. Of course, normal skills can’t hold a candle to it.’

The Skills used by the Immoral Prince was part of the new contents the Users would face once they reached the third part of the Main Scenario Quest. It was the Fallen Kingdom episode.



Anyways,, the Immoral Prince was a monster that possessed every advantage that a User had. This shouldn't be seen as facing a Raid opponent. One had to think of it as a PVP battle. This was why the Immoral Prince Raid needed multiple skilled Users. One needed experts that could last at least one minute with the Immoral Prince.

‘In the end, we have to use our numeric superiority.’

There was the Hydra guild's Sohank, Red Bull's Chev, Stormhunter's Shir and the Hahoe Mask Hyrkan.

These 4 people would decide whether the Raid would be a success or a bust.

“Hoo-ooh.”

An automatic sigh came out of Ahn-jaehyun's mouth when he thought about it. Including himself, there were four people who he knew were skilled enough. On the other hand, will the four Users, who were overflowing with personalities, be able to work together?

‘I hope the crazy bitch doesn't fight the crazy bastards.’

Even the thought of it made his insides hurt. Ahn-jaehyun picked up a jelly pouch to calm his stomach. He clamped his mouth over it.



‘Huh?’

At that moment, Ahn-jaehyun saw an icon indicating the arrival of an email on his Tablet PC. Ahn-jaehyun lightly touched it with his finger.

It was sent by Chev.

‘What can this be?’

The content was....

‘In the end, that crazy bitch did something reckless!’

The Stormhunters guild had gone rogue.

8.

‘No matter how I see it, this is crazy. ’

Hatch was putting the consumable items into the pockets that was present all over his body. He stopped his movements for a brief moment, and he shook his head from side to side.

‘She wants to do the Immoral Prince Raid by ourselves....’



When the Immoral Prince Raid was failed twice, the Immoral Prince moved to a different location.

Clues that notified one of the location of the Immoral Prince was given through the Battle Tokens. The Stormhunters guild used their information network, and they were able to find the location immediately. Everything up until that point was business as usual.

However, when the location was discerned, a special order came down mobilizing the Raid teams on standby for the Immoral Prince Raid.

She wanted to attempt the Immoral Prince Raid with only the Stormhunters!

‘The Queen has completely lost her mind.’

This decision couldn’t have come from a rational and logical mind.

If other words, this was evidence that Shir was indescribably angry.

‘Well, she had been treated like a complete third wheel up until now. If one considered the Queen’s personality, it is a miracle that she had lasted until now.’

Shir had always received the best spotlights. She had always been in the top spot, yet no one was paying attention to her recently.



This lack of interest was a humiliation that was hard for her to endure.

Moreover, the Hahoe Mask's fame was piercing through the sky, and without her realizing it, the Red Bulls were being considered the best of the 30 great guilds. This was a definite problem, and she wouldn't stand for it.

If one messed with Shir, it was basically pushing a button that made a bomb explode.

‘This isn't the right move.’

At that moment, Hatch mustered up his courage.

The Stormhunters was Hatch's place of employment. Warlord was a part of his life now. The cost of a failed raid would be enormous. He was well aware of this fact. If this was inevitable, he had to blunt the damage. When a leader decides to do something reckless, the subordinate had to stop the bleeding.

‘In the end, the Queen won't listen to me if I speak... I have no choice, but to inform the Hydra and Red Bulls.’

Hatch was determined to see this through.

‘Uh-whew. I have to quickly get out of this guild. If I stay here, I don't think I'll live a full life. The hospital said they saw some bleeding from my GI tract. I was told to avoid eating trigger foods,



and to avoid stress.....’



# Chapter 133 – Immoral Prince (1)

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1.

[The Blue Snake looks at the White Roof. Find the Red Mirror underneath the roof. Then you will see an angular landmark. This landmark will stretch out to the left. It will fork endlessly.]

When the great battle was concluded, everyone's attention was turned towards the Immoral Prince. The Users without the Battle Tokens couldn't participate in the Immoral Prince Raid. Therefore, the only thing they could do was to decipher the words that appeared on the Battle Tokens. They tried to interpret the cryptic code, which gave away the location of the Immoral Prince.

Unexpectedly, a lot of Users participated in this endeavor, and they had fun doing it.

- Where does a Blue Snake type monster appear?
- Is it talking about the Blue Dragon?
- Dragons aren't snakes. I'm pretty sure it is talking about the Blue Giant Snake. I'm clearly right!
- ⊥ I don't think the Immoral Prince would hide at a hunting ground where a level 60 Boss monster comes out. It would make more sense to say a bear was hiding in a rabbit hole.



It wasn't really that they enjoyed it, but in truth, this was the only way they could participate in the Main Scenario Quest. Also, there was an additional incentive to solve it. The 3 guilds, who were participating in the Immoral Raid, had put up a bounty on the correct interpretation of the cryptic words. One could earn around 5 thousand dollars from figuring it out. It was more than a pocket change.

Anyways, there were a lot of hunting grounds in existence in Warlord. It was more annoying than difficult to find the location through such ambiguous hints. Moreover, a lot of the characteristics described was shared by many locations in Warlord. A mountain was a mountain, and a lake was a lake.

When the Immoral Prince Raid was failed twice, the new hints appeared on the Battle Tokens. It took about 3 to 4 days to decipher the hints. Despite knowing all of this, the teams attempted the Raid. None of the teams were able to last even an hour in the Raid. When the Raid failed, the Immoral Prince immediately left the location. The losing groups took a terrible beating in many ways.

‘They were very unlucky.’

If seen in those terms, the Stormhunters was very lucky. After the second Immoral Prince Raid was a failure, the Stormhunters was able to decipher the cryptic hints on the same day they got it.

‘I never expected the Immoral Prince to appear at a location we just found. It is said that the bread always fall on the buttered side down....’



The Blue Snake symbolized a Blue river, and the White Roof was a snow covered mountain. Everyone reached a consensus on this interpretation. However, there were about 50 locations with a blue river and a snow covered mountain.

Therefore, the crucial part was the Red Mirror, and the angular landmark. Surprisingly, the Stormhunters had found a region that checked off the two remaining requirements.

Patagonia mountain.

It was a region found recently by the Stormhunters. Several days ago, this stage had a Block Field over it.

The Patagonia mountain had a Red Lake, and a tree had been struck by lightning. The tree had been burnt to death, and it was the angular landmark. Of course, this location was very hard to find.

If the Patagonia mountain hadn't been found and professionally investigated by the Storm Hunters, no one would have been able to find the Red Mirror and the angular landmark. Moreover, the Patagonia mountain was teeming with level 190 monsters, and it would take a long time to explore this mountain.

This was why events had turned out like this.

'The fact that we found this place first was the reason behind our



problem now. Why did it have to be this way?’

This was the reason why the Storm Queen Shir had decided to monopolize the 3rd Immoral Prince Raid run.

If it was a location everyone knew about, everyone would inevitably be watching their every move. The two other guilds would try to meddle in their business. However, the Stormhunters didn’t have to worry about that. Unless there was a Judas within their guild, there was no way the other guilds would find out about their actions.

On the other hand, Hatch was very pessimistic about this raid, so these were all signs of bad luck to him.

When he saw the trees thick with leaves around the Red Lake and the presence of the burnt tree, he couldn’t help, but feel very depressed.

“Hey. What’s are you doing!”

On top of it all, the Storm Princess Hahui was unnecessarily trying to pick a fight with him. She possessed an unfortunate name, and she had the eyes of a fire dragon.

“What do you think I’m doing? I’m sighing.”

“ A sigh? Why?”



When Hahui gave a retort, Hatch looked at her as if she was the most pitiful human being in this world.

Shweek!

Hahui's fist flew towards Hatch's face.

“Huhk!”

Hatch dodged the fist in fright. The fist had come very close to striking him. The fist brushed by his left cheek.

“Hey! Why the hell are you punching me for! Fuck!”

“You were having some weird thoughts as you were looking at me, right? You wanna die?”

“Bring it on. Try killing me once! Try killing me!”

The atmosphere between the two of them was turning nasty, and attention was being drawn towards them. However, nothing unfortunate happened.

“Stop.”

At Shir's single word, Hatch and Hahui turned their glares to



different directions.

This was the charisma possessed by Shir. She had a worse temper than these two, so she was able to control them even through a short word.

“We’ll start the Immoral Prince Raid in 6 hours.”

There was no one, who could make a retort, when one heard anger mixed in with her words.

Hatch gulped.

‘Whether I die from a beating or from a stabbing, I’ll be dead at the end. It seems I can’t avoid this.’

2.

“Patagonia mountain?”

– It is a location recently discovered by the Stormhunters guild. This is all according to Ballista’s words.

“A recently found region..... In many ways, they were lucky.”

At the First Head’s explanation, Chev let out a sigh as he tapped his fist on his forehead.



A ridiculous development had just occurred. This wasn't some low level administrator acting out in this way. The Stormhunters guild was one of the 30 great guilds, and they had broken an agreement they previously agreed with the Red Bulls and the Hydra guild. They had made an independent decision to do this Raid on their own. Moreover, it would have been better if the leader had done all of this for profit. However, this event had occurred, because of Shir's bullheadedness. Her actions defied common sense.

Chev was very irritated by the situation, but at the same time, he quickly accepted the situation.

‘As expected of a crazy bitch.’

If someone else had done this, he would have been suspicious instead of being surprised. However, the Storm Queen was quite capable of doing this.

Anyways, the Stormhunters had made their decision, and they were going to carry out their mission. They would have to react accordingly.

– What do you plan on doing?

“What about your side?”

– Anyways, we only have two choices available to us.



They could either become spectators or join up in the action.

If one thought about it rationally, one could already surmise the probability of success was very low for the Stormhunters if they tried the Immoral Prince Raid on their own. The Stormhunters had sinned by offending them, so they could just watch the Stormhunters fail. They weren't required to join and help the Stormhunters.

The problem was the fact that the decisions made by Stormhunters wasn't bound by logic.

- If the Stormhunters fail this Raid, they'll never participate in one afterwards.

“That'll cause a big headache.”

If the Stormhunters guild failed this Raid, there was zero chance that they'll show any remorse for their actions. At the same time, the Stormhunters guild would immediately give up on the Immoral Prince Raid. The Storm Queen's pride wouldn't allow for a reattempt. She probably was well aware of the consequences, yet she chose to go through with her actions.

- If the Stormhunters drops out, the Immoral Prince Raid will become very hard.

The absence of the Stormhunters couldn't be glossed over.



The two of them were watching the footage of the Immoral Prince raid as they held their conversation. In the world of Warlord, these two men were basically cut from the same cloth, and they both had an appropriate fear about the Immoral Prince.

On top of it all, only those with the Battle Tokens could participate in the Immoral Prince Raid. If the Stormhunters drops out, it would be very difficult to replace them.

If so, would it be better to mobilize now and help the Stormhunters?

However, both men were having a hard time seeing this as the right answer.

“Did you perhaps calculate the benefit cost analysis of joining the Stormhunters?”

The Immoral Prince Raid was a business decision. Their decision would change based on the calculation of the profits and losses. If helping the Stormhunters was more profitable than watching from the sidelines, they’ll take appropriate actions.

– How many live tickets were sold?

“We sold as much as possible through the pre-sales. How many commercials spots did you sell?



– We’ve sold it all. However, we weren’t able to sell it at a high rate as you guys.

Even if the two guilds helped out the Stormhunters in this Raid, they weren’t expected to lose much money. They had already sold the live tickets through pre-sale, and the contracts for the commercials had been finalized.

– We won’t lose anything from helping them.

“Of course, there will be some loss, but we can request compensation for our loss from the Stormhunters.”

Even if they did suffer a loss, they could ask for compensation from the Stormhunters. Of course, they would have to succeed in the Immoral Prince Raid to do this.

– Are you ready for the Raid?

The next problem was the preparation for the Raid.

“I can finish all preparation in 10 minutes.”

The preparation had been finished a long time ago. Both sides had gathered a team of professionals that were qualified to participate in the Immoral Prince Raid. They had been passing time by training and leveling up at the hunting grounds.



All the equipments and consumable Items that would be used in the Raid had been prepared. The two guilds even synced their hours of operation. Everyone logged in and logged out at the same time. Everyone slept for the same amount of time. All the participants had also received a checkup.

If one worried about the preparedness of the Hydra guild and the Red Bulls guild, it was basically an insult to them.

It wouldn't be bad to join the Immoral Prince Raid in secret with the Stormhunters.

However, they couldn't be satisfied from just participating in the Raid. They had to find a way to maximize their profits.

– If I'm to come up with a plan, I'll probably let the Stormhunters go first. We enter afterwards, and each team will find and destroy the relics. I think that'll be for the best.

“Should we use the Stormhunters as bait?”

– If we use the Stormhunters as bait, we will be able to destroy 2 relics... No. The Stormhunters would also have to form a team that'll destroy the relic, while they occupy the Immoral Prince. If we are lucky, we can use the Stormhunters as bait, and we'll be able to destroy at least 3 relics.

They were going to use the Stormhunters as bait. Aside from whether the hunt is a success or not, the bait would suffer the most



damage. This was why the bait was also called the sacrificial lamb.

If the three guilds worked within the framework of the agreement, no one would have been used as bait. No one wanted to be the sacrificial lamb.

However, the Storhunters guild was the first one to break their agreement. Even if the Stormhunters guild was used as bait, they couldn't officially expressed their dissatisfaction.

Of course, they'll probably express their anger through the unofficial channels, but the Red Bulls guild and the Hydra guild was on equal standing with the Stormhunters. These two guilds had no reason to be scared of the Stormhunters.

“I would like to read a more detailed description of the plan.”

– I'll send it to you immediately. However, I want you to tell me about the Hahoe Mask first. I won't be able to make a complete plan if his information is absent.

“I'll contact you again in 10 minutes.”

After exactly 10 minutes, Chev sent the First Head a message. It was a very short text message.

[The Hahoe Mask will join up later.]



Chev, who was sending the message, did not have a happy expression on his face.

3.

Shir was leading from the front, and 25 members from the Stormhunters guild were following her in a straight line. The angular tree was to their left, and each member of the group put a distance of 2 meters between each other.

It happened 10 minutes into their walk.

Shir was the first one to disappear from sight. Everyone followed her example as they followed after her, and they all disappeared from sight.

Hatch was at the end of the line, and at some point, he lost sight of all of his comrades. However, Hatch didn't feel any confusion.

‘Good.’

Instance Dungeon.

The battle with the Immoral Prince was a content that can only be done by selected Users. Moreover, a defeat meant the annihilation of the whole Raid Party.

The Users in front of him had entered the Instance Dungeon one



by one. Moreover, the Users in the front was informing the others of what was happening through the Voice Talk.

At that moment, Hatch knew this was the opportunity he had been waiting for. He turned his head to look backwards.

Hatch sensed something.

Hatch sent a signal towards the location where he sensed a presence.

– Hey! Hatch! Where are you? If you don't want a beating, hurry up and come in!

At that moment, Hahui's sharp voice was heard in Hatch's ears. Hatch put on a sour expression as he walked to the other side of the barrier where everyone had disappeared to.

[The barrier's power was rendered useless by the Battle Token.]

Hatch heard the Announcement in his ears, and he immediately stepped forward. He disappeared like the others.

Hatch had felt two presences. One was the Hydra guild's Eighth Head Natal. The other was an expert named Two Kims, who represented the Red Bulls. After they looked at each other once, they started to speak in a low whisper.



“The Stormhunters entered the location of the battle.”

This was the final stage of the second Main Scenario Quest. The final battle with the Immoral Prince had just started.



# Chapter 134 – Immoral Prince (2)

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4.

People learned from defeat.

Of course, the two attempts at the Immoral Prince Raid ended in a crushing defeat, but at the same time, it was a chance to find out how to defeat the Immoral Prince.

Two roles needed to be filled to defeat the Immoral Prince.

There was the Relic Destroyer team, which eliminated the guardians defending the relics. Then there was the Prince Interference team. They had to constantly move to distract the Immoral Prince.

It wasn't too hard to destroy the Relics. The Relic Guardians were the type of monsters that had high defense and a lot of HP. Its attack power, attack pattern and skills were above average. It wasn't an easy monster to face, but the difficulty was much lower than the unusually scary monster called the White-eye Knight Argardo.

If one could buy time with the Immoral Prince, it was ok to have a small Relic Destroyer Team. It was possible to do the Immoral Prince Raid with a small group.

Basically, if Shir could occupy the Immoral Prince by herself, it



was possible for the Stormhunters to accomplish their tasks even with a team of 25 Users.

Shir was confident about the plan. She was confident that she was stronger than anyone in Warlord. The only one that affected her opinion about this fact was the Hahoe Mask. However, even he could only affect her opinion. Shir thought very highly of the Hahoe Mask, but she had never thought she was worse than him.

Moreover, there was good reasons why she was able to have so much confidence in herself.

Immoral Prince.

The Blacksmith Olf had found a mysterious and marvelous metal that had been found by an ancient kingdom. Its existence hadn't even been recorded in history. Olf had created a very large ash-colored armor. Prince Dean was already a large man, but the armor made him look several times larger. Moreover, the helmet placed on top of this large armor looked different from normal helmets. It was shaped like a crown, and the helmet had a T-shaped opening where one should have been able to see the Immoral Prince's eyes. However, one could only see black light being emitted from where its eyes should be. Then there was the cape that was around his enormous armored body. It had the print of a trigonal symbol on it. There were three snakes biting each other's tail.

It made one breathless when see the dignity flowing off of the Immoral Prince. The thought of facing it was daunting, yet the Storm Queen lived up to her reputation... No, she was performing beyond her earned reputation.



‘My god. She lasted for 5 minutes.’

‘In truth, I thought this was a suicidal mission. However, at this pace... Maybe we might succeed in this Raid.’

Five minutes.

This was the amount of time Shir had been able to occupy the Immoral Prince.

They weren’t evenly matched, but the battle was a close call.

If she was an average expert, her body would have been flung backwards from the powerful attack. However, she just swayed once after she blocked the attack. Another powerful attack that would have destroyed her defensive gear and body was sent towards her. She was able to dodge it even though she had lost her balance. There was a overwhelming difference in their battle capability, but she refused to stay on the defensive. She went on the offensive against the Immoral Prince. She made it so that the Immoral Prince couldn’t swing its sword properly. She was like a shield trying to bait attacks to defend.

It was a fierce fight.

“Hahui!”



“Yes! I’ll endure!”

This was a hard fight with an asterisk attached to it.

At Shir’s shout, Hahui threw herself towards the Immoral Prince.

‘How dare you do that to the Queen! You are dead!’

She had watched Shir’s battle, and Hahui’s body had been itching to carry out her mission. Hahui’s charge was fierce.

While Hahui was facing off against the Immoral Prince, Shir backed out. The three Priests on standby crowded her as they started chanting their prayers. They had started to cast their buffs.

This was what allowed her to carry out this fierce battle. She had Full Buff. Five minutes was how long the Buffs were active.

Of course, one couldn’t disparage her skill for this reason. The Immoral Prince was strong. This became immediately apparent when it fought against Hahui. She had similar Specs as Shir, and she had also received the Full Buff. However, Hahui received a critical wound only after 1 minute had passed.

She was unable to parry the sword swung by the Immoral Prince. Hahui’s left arm flew backwards.

Shweeek!



In a flash, the Immoral Prince had sliced through her elbow.

While Hahui was flustered, three Striker on standby charged towards the Immoral Prince. Two of them attempted an attack on the Immoral Prince, and the remaining Striker exited the battlefield carrying Hahui like a luggage.

“I can do this! I can hang on!”

Hahui struggled, but her arm had been severed. Of course, her movements were weakened compared to her normal self.

As they bought time, Shir had once again received a Full Buff. She let out a yell.

“I’m ready!”

The Priests and Swordsmen engaged in the battle ebbed away, and Shir once again charged towards the Immoral Prince like an arrow.

Then everyone wordlessly watched the battle that had started up once again.

5.

The Iron Golem wasn’t that small. It possessed a body that was 3



meters tall, and a diamond larger than a man's fist was placed on the crown of the Iron Golem's head. The diamond was embedded in so deep that it couldn't be extracted unless the Golem's iron head was split open.

It was the Relic Guardian.

There was two Tankers in front of the Relic Guardian, and they were constantly drawing its aggro.

During all of this, a magician was circling around the golem at a high speed.

“Position! Get in position! Just stay as you are. I'll work around you!”

Ballista Hatch.

Normally, he was known for his unfunny sketches with Hahui. He was someone who always complained. Unlike his ridiculous and lame look, he was one of the top 5 Magicians in Warlord. He was incredibly skilled.

His specialty was using the Moving Casting skill in battle. He was able to move constantly in battle, yet he was always accurate with his strike.

Of course, he wasn't moving just for the sake of moving. His constant movements had a purpose. He was able to dodge the



attack of enemies in real time, and it lessened the burden placed on the Tankers. He could move around the monsters engaged with the Tankers. This meant the Tankers didn't have to lure the monsters towards a specific location or a direction. Hatch would find the location and timing of his attack on his own.

“Don't over do it! I'll take the aggro, and while I buy some time, you guys brace up for battle! Give us another round of Buffs!”

When the Tankers were about to falter, Ballista had drawn the aggro towards himself. While he was being chased, he kept using his magic. He was buying time, so his comrades could reform the battle line. Hatch was considered to be the number 1 magician every Tanker wanted to hunt with.

He clearly had an in depth knowledge about the monsters, and he had the ability to adapt to various situation adroitly. He was able to comprehend battle situations in real time, and he was able to come up with solutions through his analysis. He was also capable of commanding others. This was why Hatch had been the obvious choice to lead the hunt against the Relic Guardians.

Currently, the plan was progressing very smoothly and stably under the command of Hatch.

“Full Buff is complete.!”

“The next Tanker will take on the Aggro.”



It had been 7 minutes since they started the battle with the Relic Guardian. There hadn't been any casualties or even injuries during that time. If 100 was the full score, his great command would be scored at over a 90.

‘This isn't that hard, but.....’

However, Hatch wasn't satisfied with the battle.

‘This might take longer than expected.’

The battle was smooth, but there was no breaks. Moreover, the speed of the battle was changing constantly.

‘We've hit it numerous time, yet it is showing only a crack.... I never expected it to be like this. At the very least, we'll need 15 minutes to catch it. If we are to catch the other Guardians, it would take over 40 minutes.....’

At that moment, Hatch thought about the update he heard a moment ago.

Shir's first engagement had lasted 5 minutes. Hatch had be very surprised at the news. Shir had said she would buy enough time for them, but he had never expected her to keep her word.

‘The Queen is a monster amongst monsters.’



When he heard the news, his faith in his leader was renewed. She was an incredible woman. Her amazing ability allowed Shir to run the guild in a near dictatorship, and all the guild members followed her. Shir didn't hesitate or back down from any problems, and she was always in the frontlines to make the breakthrough

However, the following update made Hatch's heart feel heavy.

‘.....however, the rest of us are just merely good at gaming.’

He had heard Hahui had barely lasted a minute, and her arm had been severed. He didn't look down on Hahui's skills. He was well aware of the skill difference between Shir and Hahui. There was no way there was such a large gap in skills. It wasn't large enough of a difference where one would have lasted a minute and the other lasted 5 minutes.

This meant one of them was overworking herself.

Shir had boldly declared that she would be able to last for an hour, but from Hatch's perspective, he estimated she would last about 15 minutes. He was willing to bet his 2 years of experience that the situation would deteriorate towards the end of the 3rd exchange with the Immoral Prince.

‘Shit. Why aren't those bastards contacting me?’

In the end, they needed outside help.



It was as if they had read Hatch's mind.

An urgent news arrived.

– This is bad! The Hydra Guild and the Red Bulls Guild just started their live Immoral Prince broadcast!

The fact that the two guilds had started their broadcast meant the two guilds were already here.

Hatch closed his mouth tight.

‘Yes. Instead of losing everything, it is better to gain something. This is the right thing to do.’

He knew he wouldn't receive praise for his actions. However, in Hatch's judgement, he was sure his plan would bring a better result than Shir's plan of doing this alone.

– The two guilds have announced their plan. They are going to destroy the Relic Guardians, while the Stormhunters act as bait..... Did we agree to this?

However, Hatch's expression didn't last long. His firmly closed mouth unconsciously dropped open.

‘Ah.’



Hatch realized it at that moment.

‘These assholes are trying to fuck us....’

The people he had called in were tigers, and he had briefly forgotten about this fact. However, he realized that truth at that moment.

6.

When the Red Bulls guild and the Hydra guild entered the Immoral Prince raid, they didn’t even bother speaking to the Stormhunters. They immediately started to hunt down the Relic Guardians. The two guilds moved in perfect sync to catch the Relic Guardians. It looked as if the three guilds had planned this. It looked as if the Raid had been planned like a surprise party.

From the outside, the three guilds were perfectly in sync in their actions.

“Which son of a bitch was it!”

Of course, from the Stormhunters’ perspective, they couldn’t help, but let out curse words. Actually, the current raid was being broadcasted on the Stormhunters’ live channel, and Hahui was continuously spitting out swear words. She was about to drop everything and attack the Red Bulls or the Hydra guild.



“Which son of a bitch betrayed us!”

Fortunately, Hahui had made several accidents in the past, so there had been measures taken. Her words didn't come out through the broadcast speakers.

Anyway, she was rightfully angry. It was understandable. This mission wasn't known to outsiders, so there shouldn't have been any intervention or intrusion.

In other words, there was most definitely a betrayer amongst them. Since she was channeling their anger for them, the guild members didn't commit any rash acts. In such an atmosphere of anger, if someone who represented their anger spoke, they would naturally listen to her words.

Of course, there was only one person that could give an answer to her question.

It was the betrayer.

– It was me. I passed along the information to the other two guilds.

At that moment, Hatch confessed the fact that he was the betrayer. At that moment, everyone shut their eyes tight.

‘Of all the.....’



Everyone expected Hahui to yell in an earsplitting rage. They were sure she was going to let out a thunderous roar towards Hatch.

“Uh? Why? Really? Why did you do it?”

However, Hahui’s response was unexpected. Instead of anger, she asked questions that was filled with genuine shock. Even the guild members that had known her for a long time had never seen this side of her before.

This instead made everyone become more flustered.

Hatch’s betrayal.... They were having a hard time accepting it. Hatch always complained, but he was someone who worked harder than anyone for the Stormhunters.

Moreover, what did he gain from betraying them?

No matter what angle they looked at it, Hatch didn’t have much to gain from this betrayal.

On top it all, Hahui’s reaction added to the confusion.

The confused atmosphere created a state of disorder.

“Focus on the battle.”



Shir was the one that organized the atmosphere.

She had dropped out of battle to receive another Full Buff. After speaking that short sentence, she gritted her teeth like a boxer clamping down on her mouthguard.

She was expressing her intent of only focusing on the battle.

[The effect of the 'Candy from the Bloodsucker Tree's Sap' was activated.]

She immediately started her fight again. Hatch's betrayal or the intrusion by the two guilds didn't register in her head.

It was the same for the Immoral Prince. These events were happening within the barrier it had raised to hide its body, yet it didn't lose its calm.

When Shir once again charged forward, the Immoral Prince didn't show any particular signs. It lightly opened its hand, and a stream of fire rose up into the air. The stream of fire transformed into a large bird, and it flew towards Shir.

The attack was endlessly flashy and powerful, but it was merely a normal attack for the Immoral Prince.



Ggee-ah-ah!

The Fire Bird let out a cry as it swallowed up Shir. Armor was useless in front of the Fire Bird. The Fire Bird wormed its way into the gaps in Shir's armor, and her skin was being charred. Her HP was being ruthlessly chipped away. This was only a game, yet her body suddenly heated up as if she was in a sauna.

It was evidence that she had taken a massive amount of damage.

However, her HP started to recover immediately. It was thanks to the 'Candy from the Bloodsucker Tree's Sap'.

Of course, the Fire Bird didn't slow down Shir's charge in the least.

In a flash, Shir had closed the distance with the Immoral Prince, and flame was still encircling her sword from the Fire Bird's attack.

The Immoral Prince had no thoughts of dodging Shir's attack. The Immoral prince also lightly swung its sword. A red aura was being retained by the sword swung by the Immoral Prince.

'Shit!'

Shir stopped everything in fright, and she forcefully twisted her body to the side. At the same time, the sword swung by the Immoral Prince split the air.



Soo-ooht!

The sound was very reedy. The sound was too light. It gave off the impression as if the sword hadn't been swung.

However, accompanying this light sound, a large sword scar appeared on top of the ground and in between the vegetation.

It was as if the world had been cut in half.

Shir rolled on the ground after she forcefully avoided the attack. The Immoral Prince turned its back on Shir.

It seemed the Immoral prince was going to destroy the new groups that was destroying its relic. It was about to move in to destroy them.

When she was ignored, Shir gritted her teeth.

“You should focus on the battle with me.”

She spoke through her gritted teeth. She didn't sound resolute. Her voice was more of a mixture of restlessness and a bit of gloominess. She worked hard to ignore her feelings, and she ran in towards the Immoral Prince. At that moment, she couldn't pay attention to what was going on in her surrounding.



Of course, she had no idea.

‘.....isn’t this the stronger version of the Crescent Moon Cut named Red Moon Sword Qi? If I had been hit by that..... I would have died in a really preposterous manner.’

She had no idea that the person she wanted to possess the most was nearby in the battlefield. She had no idea Hyrkan was there.

7.

Red Moon Sword Qi.

This skill would probably make the Swordsman Class Users’ blood boil in couple months time. This fearsome skill had made a deep scar on the ground next to him. Hyrkan was doing his best to shrink his body next to this scar. He carefully used the hologram monitor to check the live broadcasts of the 3 guilds.

‘What a shit show.’

A mocking smile rested on Hyrkan’s lips. No one knew Hyrkan was here right now. The Red Bulls had a contract with Hyrkan, but they thought he was resting after he finished leveling up.

‘I knew this would happen.’

This was the reason why Hyrkan deceived the Red Bulls.



There was two reasons behind his deceit.

First, his contract didn't forbid him from doing this. Hyrkan didn't have to follow Red Bulls' Raid plan. It was actually the opposite. If the Red Bulls wanted to broadcast footage of Hyrkan, they would have to work around Hyrkan's schedule.

The second reason was the fact that he had predicted this would happen.

'Well, it doesn't matter if it's the cow bastards or the snake bastards. They all act the same.'

It was a cold situation where the two guilds were trying to take away the meaty part of the reward, while the Stormhunters was used as bait. It hadn't been too hard to predict what they were going to do. It was said like attracts like. These bastards thought alike, so it wasn't too hard to discern their intent.

'As expected, I don't like these kinds of people.'

At that moment, Hyrkan turned his head once again to look at Shir, who was earnestly fighting the Immoral Prince. He looked at the guild members of the Stormhunters looking intently at Shir's battle. They were so focused on the battle that there was no chance they would notice Hyrkan's existence.

The tail end of Hyrkan's lips rose as if it had been hooked by a



fishing hook.

It was a situation where the Stormhunters had become the bait. In some ways, this improved Hyrkan's mood. It felt as if his hurting inside improved in the span of a morning.

On the other hand, he shouldn't be smiling. The current situation wasn't that great.

Hyrkan returned the corner of his mouth to its original position. Then he tried to reason with himself.

'First, I have to put aside the feelings I have towards the Stormhunters. Let me think after I put away those feelings.'

Their current situation wasn't that great.

'If the Storm Queen dies here, it doesn't matter how many Users are left in the Stormhunters guild. They'll be uncooperative no matter what.'

The Stormhunters were the first to cause a problem, but the Red Bulls and Hydra guild responded with similar type of behaviors as the Stormhunters. During all of this, if Shir suffered a Game Over, the Stormhunters would never cooperate with the other two guilds.

'We'll be fortunate if they don't interfere with the Raid.'



If the worst situation comes to pass, the remaining Stormhunters guild members might attack the other two guilds. They would interfere with the Immoral Prince Raid.

Even if that doesn't come to pass, the Stormhunters might abstain from the battlefield. In the end, the Red Bulls, Hydra, and the Hahoe Mask would have to face the Immoral Prince.

Of course, they could do it.

‘However, if the Stormhunters drop out, I might be in the same position as Che-sulyun.’

If the two guilds cooperate with each other, it was unknown as to whether Hyrkan would be able to hold the floor with them. That was the problem.

‘If I don't want to die, I have to fight with my life on the line.’

There was no way the two guilds knew about Hyrkan's situation.

However, they could, at the very least, predict that Hyrkan would fight desperately against the Immoral Prince. It was a given that Hyrkan wouldn't just standby and do nothing in the Immoral Prince hunt. The price of failing to kill the Immoral Prince was annihilation. Moreover, from Hyrkan's perspective, Hyrkan needed to have the biggest role in the Immoral Prince series.



‘Anyways, I never expected Che-sulyun to fight so well. If I work with the Stormhunters, the chance of victory is over 90%.’

Moreover, it wouldn’t be easy to kill the Immoral Prince if the Stormhunters pull themselves out of this Raid.

While the Stormhunters stood back from the Immoral Prince Raid, there was a good chance that multiple groups might turn against him. There was a high probability of the two guilds wouldn’t help out, while Hyrkan faced impossible odds.

In the worst case scenario, the Hahoe Mask would buy them as much time as they needed against the Immoral Prince to complete their tasks. Afterwards, the Red Bulls and Hydra guild could join hands, and they would be the only ones that would get a happy ending.

‘Anyways, I can’t trust those two guilds no matter what.’

If Hyrkan was asked to name the guild he hated the most in the 30 great guilds, he would say it was the Stormhunters. However, this didn’t mean he had inexhaustible amount of faith in the other 29 guilds.

This was also true for the Red Bulls. He had decided to work with them, but he didn’t trust them. They were all doing this for profit. In other words, if Hyrkan aimed for their share in the profit and he caused a loss for the Red Bulls, their attitude and stance towards him would change.



So what was the best case scenario?

It would be for best if the 3 guilds were all wiped out, and Hyrkan was the last man standing. This wasn't a guarantee. It was only a guess, but if the Hahoe Mask could monopolize all the rewards given in the Immoral Prince series, he wouldn't have to worry about Items anymore.

However, this scenario was unrealistic.

As always, the best case scenario rarely came to fruition. This was why a person should act in a way where they could avoid the worst case scenario. One had to do this instead of working towards the best case scenario.

In his current situation, the second best policy was to choose the path with the highest probability of killing the Immoral Prince.

This was beyond considering the risks and returns. He must catch the Immoral Prince, and he had to choose the method where his survival was guaranteed.

To accomplish this, Shir had to survive, and the performance of the Stormhunters was critical.

“Hoo-ooh.”

Hyrkan regulated his breathing.



‘My life is really fucked up.’

A lot of thoughts passed through his mind. There were a lot of regrets in his past experiences, but at the same time, those experiences had nothing to do with his current situation. The memories of those times no longer existed now, and these thoughts flitted through his head.

The thought of his past experiences made this choice very hard hard to swallow. In the end, Hyrkan had to convince his pride more so than anything else.

He wasn't helping the Stormhunters and Che-sulyun. This was a necessary task he had to accomplish if he wanted to step over everyone... It wasn't a brief amount of time, but he was finally able to convince his pride with regards to his course of action.

Hyrkan pulled himself together as he got up.

‘This is for me.’

8.

If one kept sprinting in consecutive races, one's record would get worse instead of getting better.

Battle was similar in that aspect.



Shir was able to last 5 minutes in her first battle with the Immoral Prince. However, she was only able to buy 4 minutes on her second try. On the third attempt, she had started the fight when she hadn't been able to pull her emotions back together.

This was why she started to rapidly waver after 3 minutes into her 3rd battle. Eventually, an accident happened.

The Immoral Prince's sword was dyed red, but Shir didn't stop her charge as the Immoral Prince used the Red Crescent Moon skill. She changed her steps to lean herself diagonally, and she was barely able to dodge the Red Crescent Moon.

She used the Dash skill at the same time as she dodged the attack.

In a flash, she closed a distance of about 15 meters. As she closed the distance, she used her Booster skill.

She even used the Crescent Moon Cut skill. This meant there was no way she would be able to evade backwards.

She didn't care about the damage. When her attack reached it, the Immoral Prince would start the battle with her again. This was what Shir was aiming for.

'If it dodges backward, I'll use Body Slam to initiate a close combat....'



Of course, inside Shir's head, the next move, the next move and the next next move was formulated. She was thinking three moves ahead. If she was incapable of thinking ahead, her head would be useless.

The problem was her decrease in stamina. Her judgement was becoming dulled.

Shir was trying to think about her next move, so she wasn't able to counterattack or even dodge the Immoral Prince's attack. She also missed the fact that the Immoral Prince had used a much faster version of the Dash skill she had used. She wasn't able to immediately recognize this fact.

‘Ah!’

When Shir became aware of this fact, the Immoral Prince's sword was already touching Shir's shoulder.

Kwah-jeek!

The sword sliced through her black armor and her left shoulder.

Koohng!

At the same time, the Immoral Prince followed up with a Body Slam. Shir had lost her arm, and her body was in a baad state as she rolled across the floor.



The first one to move in this situation was Hahui.

Usually, she would charge in while yelling ‘My Queen!’, but she silently charged forward.

She wasn’t in a Full Buff state, and she hadn’t even used her own Buffs on herself. The speed at which Hahui was charging forward was the worst move one could pull against the Immoral Prince.

Hwee-reek!

The Immoral Prince stepped aside as if it was evading a charging bull. It easily evaded Hahui’s Body Slam. As if it had been waiting for Hahui, the sword flew in parallel to the floor like rock skipping over water. It was swift.

Soo-oohk!

The sword cut through her left thigh.

Hahui had lost a leg, so she fell over to the floor. The sword that had been swung by the Immoral Prince was reversed in an instant. It planned on pinning its sword through Hahui’s head.

‘Ah!’

It had all happened in such a brief amount of time, so no one was



able to react to the critical situation.

Aside from reacting to it, no one had been able to process what was going on. That was the reality of the situation.

In the end, the guild members hadn't moved. A third party had stepped in.

Kwah-ahng!

Accompanying a sudden sound of an explosion, a third party had appeared out of nowhere as he swung his sword towards the Immoral Prince.

Kah-ahng!

Instead of exchanging a greeting with the Immoral Prince, he shared the sound of steel with it.

It was the Hahoe Mask.



## Chapter 135 – Immoral Prince (3)

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9.

– The Hahoe Mask is here!

There hadn't been a shout that rang out from the innermost recess of the mountain. The Hahoe Mask had merely appeared in an online world, and his appearance was greeted by the sound of keyboards being typed. However, it was as if that sentence was reverberated everywhere, and the information was instantly spread to everyone on the battlefield.

Of course, it also reached the Hydra guild. They had entered into the battlefield, and they had just started their battle with the Relic Guardian.

Then they had their doubts... No, they harbored suspicion.

“Why did the Hahoe Mask appear at this point? Moreover, why is he helping the Stormhunters?”

There had been no discussion about the Hahoe Mask's intrusion when the Red Bulls guild and the Hydra guild made their plan. If things proceeded as planned, the Stormhunters would have been critically wounded by the Immoral Prince. This meant someone would have to once again face the Immoral Prince to stall it. The Hahoe Mask was scheduled to enter at that moment. However, he had intruded into the fight right now.



This was different from the plan. From Hydra guild's perspective, they couldn't help, but be suspicious of the Red Bulls.

“Matador! Was this part of the plan?”

Even the members of the Red Bulls guild was puzzled over the situation. None of the members of the Red Bulls guild had been given a heads up about this.

There was only one person that could give an answer about the this situation.

Currently, Chev was fighting a Frost Knight wearing an armor of ice that was freezing its immediate surrounding. Chev was the only one, who could answer the question.

‘Hahoe Mask. You....’

Even Chev couldn't immediately formulate his answer.

“Kims!”

In the end, Chev needed time to think and formulate an answer. Therefore, he pushed his responsibilities onto a subordinate.

Kims had been on standby. When Chev yelled out, Kims charged towards the Frost Knight, and his hammer was swung against the



Frost Knight.

Kwah-jeek!

The hammer embedded itself in the ice armor.

Jjuh-juh-juhk!

The hammer was still stuck when ice started to freeze over the weapon. The ice was spreading like a living organism. It even covered Kims' hands, which was gripping the hammer. A cold creaking sound was emitted between Kims and the Relic Guardian.

“I got him!”

This was the method used by Kims to occupy his opponent.

Chev immediately exited the battlefield. Chev distanced himself from the Frost Knight, and another striker rushed into the space vacated by Chev. A Priest immediately approached Chev.

The Priest's two palms were letting out a green light, and he started touching Chev's back. As the green light touched every part of Chev's body, the wounds on his body, and the skin that died from the extreme cold started to regenerate.

As he received the Healing Skill, Chev started thinking for a brief moment.



‘What is the Hahoe Mask’s intent?’

Red Bulls had to give an answer to the Hydra guild regarding the Hahoe Mask’s action. His answer would determine if the two guilds walked together or not. The answer was incredibly important. This was why he couldn’t give a rash, vague or an evasive answer.

‘I don’t understand what the Hahoe Mask was thinking.’

The only thing certain right now was the fact that Chev didn’t have much time to think about it. The Priest finished his Healing skill, and he immediately started on the Buff skills. When that finished, the time to think had come to an end.

This was why Chev didn’t think about Hahoe Mask’s intentions. At that moment, he thought about what the Red Bulls and the Hydra guild had to do. He had to determine which course of action would bring him the most profit. This was what he thought about.

Time passed as he thought about it some more.

“The Buff has been applied.”

When the Priest opened his mouth, Chev also opened his mouth.

“Focus on the battle. While the Hahoe Mask and Stormhunters



block the Immoral Prince, we'll take out all the Relic Guardians.”

After giving his answer, Chev changed the setting on his mic. He immediately gave an order to his broadcast team.

“Just send anyone available towards the Hahoe Mask. I want you to start the live broadcast, and put up a notice telling everyone of the Hahoe Mask's appearance. Don't forget to put in the commercials.”

– Yes!

This wasn't the end of it. Chev immediately spoke into the direct hotline to the Hydra guild.

“We'll focus on hunting down the Relic Guardians.”

– .....understood.

When Natal heard Chev's words, he didn't immediately give an answer. There was a brief pause, and Natal spoke as if there was a bad taste in his mouth.

When the conversation ended, Chev gritted his teeth.

‘I've been had by the Hahoe Mask.’



It was much harder than expected to fight someone who had higher Stats, higher level and better Items. It was also difficult to gain experience against an opponent such as this. There was no reason to fight such opponents for most people. Instead of fighting, most people just avoided the fight all together.

However, there were times when these kinds of battles had been the norm for Hyrkan. He had fought someone that was 50 levels higher than him, and there was the one who kept Unique Items in his Slots like paperhangings.... It had been the norm to fight those bastards.

At that moment, those experiences were worth its weight in gold when facing against the Immoral Prince.

Shweeeek!

He evaded the sword swung by the Immoral Prince. When Hyrkan approached the Immoral Prince, he moved like a snake slithering across the floor. Then he used a technique that looked like a tackle in wrestling.

Duhp-suhk!

Hyrkan's low movements were clever as he quickly grabbed the Immoral Prince's leg. In that state, he lifted the Immoral Prince, and he threw it as far as he could. The Immoral Prince was in the



air, but it didn't fly too far. It quickly adjusted in midair, and it landed on the ground.

When the Immoral Prince landed on the ground, one couldn't see any cracks in its defense. Instead, one could see the dark eyes from between the helmet, and one could see a dark blue light that had the sharpness of a blade. However, the light from its eye didn't mingle with Hyrkan's gaze, which was behind the Hahoe Mask.

Toohk toohk.....

Two Bone Explosives had been thrown without the Immoral Prince's knowledge. The Bone Explosives rolled up to its heel, and it promptly exploded.

Kwah-gwahng!

It was hard to believe such powerful explosion came from such small Bone Explosives, and the explosion caused dust to rise into the air.

The field of vision had become obstructed.

Ddahk!

At that moment, Hyrkan flicked his finger. The four Skeleton Warriors on standby charged towards the Immoral Prince. The Immoral Prince quickly dispatched the Skeleton Warriors approaching it. Amongst the Skeleton Warriors, there was one that



was able to dodge the sword swung by the Immoral Prince three times. However, none were able to block the Immoral Prince's attack.

The four Skeleton Warriors could only buy a short amount of time. Hyrkan clenched his fist during that time.

“Spirit of Fire.”

He spoke out in a low mumble. At the same time, fire started to leak out of his clenched fist.

The fire in Hyrkan's hand started to spread to the floor. The fire scattered across the floor erupted, and a shape of a giant formed from within the flame.

[The Fire Golem has been summoned.]

It was a level 180 Summon Skill, and this was the first appearance of the Fire Golem. It was the first time a Fire Golem had appeared in the history of Warlord.

It was large, but it couldn't be compared to the large Earth Golem he summoned before. It was around 3 meters tall. However, its body was burning up, and it was much more imposing than the Earth Golem. The two Golems were very different from each other.



The Fire Golem approached the Immoral Prince. The sound of the Fire Golem running was a very bleak sound. The ground shook every time the Earth Golem stepped on the ground, and the effect was in stark contrast to the Fire Golem. The effect of the Fire Golem's footstep was much more focused.

Hwah-roo-roo!

Fire erupted at every step taken by the Fire Golem.

During all of this, the Immoral Prince had defeated all the Skeleton Warriors. When the Immoral Prince caught sight of the Fire Golem, it immediately swung its sword horizontally in a wide arc.

Ssooohk!

Accompanying a light wind sound, the Red Moon Sword Qi was revealed once again. In a flash, it soundlessly cut the Fire Golem in half. The Fire Golem's body feebly fell forward, and it fell as if it was going to fall on top of Immoral Prince.

The process in which the Fire Golem was killed was neat and elegant.

However, the resulting death was intense.

Puh-uhng!



When the severed body of the Fire Golem hit the ground, it exploded. The explosion was quite powerful. An enormous firestorm was created as fireballs were scattered into the surrounding. In a flash, the surrounding had turned into a sea of fire.

Hyrkan rushed into the sea of fire. It was clever move. The fire hid Hyrkan's presence.

However, this ruse didn't last long.

Koo-koo-koo!

When the Immoral Prince opened its hand, a whirlwind appeared from its palm. In a flash, the fire that was engulfing its body was sucked in. It was gone in a flash.

When the fire disappeared, it was clear as day as to where Hyrkan was located at. Instead of an ambush, he repeated the greeting he conducted when they first met.

Kah-ahng!

It was a rough greeting filled with the sound of steel clashing.

Choo-roong, choo-roong!



As if to answer the sound that was created, the Crying Sword started to weep. The cry held worry for its master. Hyrkan could resist against the Immoral Prince's strength, so Hyrkan's sword arm was flung away. Hyrkan's stance was broken, and the sword gave out a cry of worry.

The Immoral Prince didn't miss the opportunity to attack Hyrkan when he was off balance. When his sword was flung backwards, Hyrkan's chest became exposed. The Immoral Prince stabbed towards his chest. At that moment, Hyrkan didn't struggle against his loss of balance. He fell backwards.

Kooohng!

He hadn't used any fall technique. He fell like a log toppling backwards, and the Immoral Prince's sword passed over him. When Hyrkan was on his back, he raised both his legs. He pushed his feet towards the nether region between its legs.

When Hyrkan executed this move, the Immoral Prince's feet was lifted into the air. Hyrkan pushed at the Immoral Prince's body, and it shot away as if was a rocket being launched.

This was it.

When facing a User with overwhelmingly superior Spec, it was a certain loss if one fought by exchanging blows with each other.

One had to push or pull to cause a loss of balance.



It was also known as the Push and Pull method by the Users that were adept at PK and PVP. This couldn't be learned by Users, who had a bad habit of picking on weaker Users. This was a skill that could be gained by those, who are used fighting opponents stronger than them.

This was one of the few rewards for fighting such a long bloody battle against the Stormhunters, and everyone else in Warlord.

The Immoral Prince didn't take much damage from such a technique. However, the Immoral Prince was having a hard time escaping the grasp of Hyrkan.

“It's been over 5 minutes.”

In the end, Hyrkan easily broke the 5 minute record set by the Storm Queen against the Immoral Prince.

At this sight, the Stormhunters guild members, who had come here to catch the Immoral Prince, looked on in a spellbound manner.

“Incredible.”

One of the people watching the Hahoe Mask was Hahui. She was the one, who always gritted her teeth, when the Hahoe Mask was mentioned. However, even she couldn't hold back her admiration. Everyone watching Hyrkan's battle couldn't help, but show



admiration towards him. Of course, this was also true for Shir.

However, Shir didn't stand there like Hahui, who had her mouth open in an absentminded manner. Shir didn't reveal her emotions.

“How long do I have left until the Regeneration is finished?”

“Ah? What?”

They were using Regeneration Skill to reattach Shir's severed arm. The Priest had been eyeing the Hahoe Mask's battle. At Shir's words, he quickly answered her.

“Ah! It'll be done in 30 seconds.”

“How about my Buff status?”

“If we want to put another round of Full Buff.... Are you going to fight again?”

Before the Priest's words could finish his words, the startled Priest asked Shir a question. However, Shir didn't answer him. There was no space in her head that would allow her to give him an answer.

‘I can't show my weakened state to the Hahoe Mask.’



She had been anticipating for the day she'll get to fight with the Hahoe Mask.

That opportunity was right in front of her, and she wouldn't show her weakened state to the Hahoe Mask. Shir wanted to fight with the Hahoe Mask. She didn't want to be helped by him.

Her ability to concentrate had already reached its limit, but she forcefully pulled herself together.

At that moment, a breaking news could be heard.

– We destroyed it! We killed one Relic Guardian!

[The Relic was destroyed. The power of the Immoral Prince's magic skill has been reduced significantly.]

The content of the breaking news indicated that Hatch had completed his mission.

11.

With Sohank at the center, the Hydra guild members was battling against the Relic Guardians. Natal was the only one not paying attention to the battle. He was having a conversation with someone else.



“What should we do?”

– Proceed.

Natal was talking to the First Head.

“Wouldn’t we be diverging from the plan? If things proceed as is, we’ll fail in using the Stormhunters as bait....”

– Still, how can we mess everything up at this point in the plan? Currently, there are over four million viewer watching through our three live channels. We can’t become the villains here.

At the end of his words, the First Head said something as if he was talking to himself.

– It is better to be the bridesmaid than the villain.

Anyone could hear the regret, scorn and sigh mixed in with his words. Natal gritted his teeth when he heard those words.

‘There had been only two parameters we had agreed to.’

They agreed to use the Stormhunters as bait. The resulting profit would be shared with the Red Bulls. To be precise, the Red Bulls and Hydra would have become the heroes. The Stormhunters was suppose to sacrifice themselves, and they would have become



relegated to a supporting role. If everything had proceeded as planned, it was a realizable plan.

However, another variable had appeared. If the two parameters had been kept, they would have held the main roles. However, the new variable had reduced the two guilds into supporting roles.

Shir and the Hahoe Mask had made a mess of the scenario crafted by the two guilds. These two variables were going above and beyond in ruining their guild's preferred scenario. They were working synergistically at an incredible level. The two of them were showing themselves to be a frightening combination.

Natal glanced at the hologram monitor. Natal grinded his teeth as he watched the battle conducted by Shir and the Hahoe Mask.

‘Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters. It is imperative that we stop the two of them from teaming up. No, the Hahoe Mask must not fall into the hands of any guild.’

12.

There were several methods one could use when dealing with a User that was stronger than oneself in a PVP. There was a method that was widely used, and it was the most effective strategy.

All things yield to number!

When facing a single person, there was nothing more effective



than two people stepping forward to fight the User. Moreover, what if these two were the two best Strikers in Warlord?

One didn't have to imagine it. The result was being broadcasted live in front of their eyes.

Kah-ahng!

Hyrkan moved his sword horizontally to block the Immoral Prince's sword, which had fallen like thunder. Accompanying the sound of steel clashing, Hyrkan's feet were pounded into the ground as if they were nails.

Ggee-eek, ggee-eek!

The Immoral Prince continued to press down with its sword against Hyrkan.

Choo-roong, choo-roong.

The Crying Sword was weeping, and Hyrkan's body kept sinking in sync with the sword's cries.

During all of this, Shir had approached the Immoral Prince from behind, and she hugged the Prince's leg. She lifted its leg. However, it seemed the Immoral Prince was used to this kind of attacks now. He put strength into his other leg to resist, but its body inevitably lost a little bit balance. It was inevitable. When the Prince lost its balance, the pressure that had been pushing down



on Hyrkan disappeared.

Instead of extracting his body, Hyrkan sunk lower to the ground to trip the Immoral Prince. The Immoral Prince once again lost his balance, and it fell forward. Shir didn't miss the opportunity. She lifted the Immoral Prince's leg, and she threw him into the distance.

The Immoral Prince rolled several times across the floor before it righted itself.

However, the Immoral Prince didn't have the luxury to focus its attention on the two. Hyrkan flicked his finger, and the three Skeleton Warriors on standby charged towards the Immoral Prince.

At best, the Skeleton Warriors would last 10 seconds.

It was a brief amount of time, but 10 seconds was the amount of time it took for the world record holder to finish a 100 meter dash. The two Strikers used the 10 seconds to digest all the available information, and they came up with a new plan. Then they threw their body into motion to carry out this plan. Ten seconds were plenty of time to do all of this.

This time Shir ran forward. She was in a sorry state. Her concentration had reached its limit, but she still didn't hesitate at all. Her price of death was larger than anyone else considering her position and level. However, this was one of Shir's strong point. She didn't have any self-conceit in regards to what she possessed.



She never thought about what she would lose.

Hyrkan could read Shir's plan. She was heading towards the rear of the Immoral Prince. She was going to attempt an attack to bait a counter-attack from the Immoral Prince. She was trying to create an opportunity for Hyrkan.

In this world and in the future, the one who was able to understand Shir the most in battle was Hyrkan. This was the result of an indescribable irony.

Anyways, Hyrkan was in sync with Shir's plan. He was moving opposite of her, and he lowered his speed compared to her. He allowed her to reach the Immoral Prince first, and he didn't interfere with her intended action.

Hyrkan had given her an unseen consideration, and Shir didn't hesitate to stab her sword in between the crumbling Skeleton Warriors.

The Immoral Prince was already cognizant of the attack. It turned its body to defend. Shir's stab was met with the swinging sword of the Immoral Prince.

Kah-ahng!

While the sound of steel rang out, Hyrkan appeared behind the Immoral Prince. When she sensed his presence, Shir put on a faint smile.



‘Perfect.’

This was the first time they were working together, but Shir and the Hahoe Mask was in perfect sync.

‘I’ll do anything to get you in my hands.’

Shir was once again burning with possessiveness in regards to the Hahoe Mask.

This was how the two of them bought time as they occupied the Immoral Prince.

– Red Bulls. Relic destruction complete!

– Hydra. Relic destruction complete!

The remaining two guilds were judicious in how they used the time bought by the two of them.

[The Relic was destroyed. The power of the Immoral Prince’s magic skill has been reduced significantly.]

[The Relic was destroyed. The power of the Immoral Prince’s magic skill has been reduced significantly.]



The three Relics were destroyed, and the three powers that had been filling the Immoral Prince started to shrink.

“This will be the price of interfering with my long-cherished desire. Your lives will not be enough.”

This was the first time the Immoral Prince had spoken.

This was the start to the last chapter of Immoral Prince episode in regards to the second Main Scenario Quest.



## Chapter 136 – Immoral Prince (4)

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13.

Every time a Relic Guardian was killed, the Relic possessed by the Relic Guardian was destroyed. The Immoral Prince lost each of his power as he lost each of his Relics. In the end, the Immoral Prince lost the powerful magic that exceeded the powers of conventional magic. He even lost the use of Red Blood Sword Qi, which had displayed the power to cut anything in this world. In the end, the Darkness that had filled its eyes started to subside too.

It was the start of the Immoral Prince escaping its own long nightmare. At the same time, it meant the Prince Dean would also have to face off against the nightmare of its own creation.

“We don’t have much time left! Endure!”

“Don’t be afraid of a Game Over! Since we are in this, we are seeing this to the end! Don’t be afraid for your life just because you can see the end!”

Of course, the battle was a nightmare from the start to finish for the groups that faced off against the Immoral Prince.

Hyrkan wasn’t watching the battle. He didn’t look at the numerous Users experiencing the nightmare together.

He was pretty far away from the fight. It was a location where



the trees had been cut or broken from the aftermath of the battle. He was sitting on the floor with his head down, and he had his back propped up against one of the intact trees. He had his eyes closed, and one couldn't even hear his breathing. Hyrkan looked like a corpse.

Not too far away from Hyrkan, there was someone, who was in the same state as Hyrkan. She was about a dozen feet away from him.

Even the Storm Queen Shir looked like a corpse.

Of course, she wasn't a real corpse. Both of them had reached their limit, and they weren't able to move. They were in a trance, and they were forcefully hanging on to consciousness through sheer force of will. If they really fell asleep, they'll be automatically logged out.

Of course, they had reached their limit, and they had no will to fight any more. Moreover, the two were having a hard time having any new or productive thoughts.

Still, if they cleared their mind, it would cause them to fall asleep. So the two of them had no choice, but to think about the simplest thoughts that was within reach. They were thinking about something that took the least amount of energy to think about.... They were repeatedly replaying their earlier memories. They were recollecting the events that occurred not too long ago.

The two of them were battling not to fall asleep. They were



thinking about what just happened as a whole. It as something they'll never be ever to forget.

Moreover, they weren't the only ones that were thinking about this ensemble. Two other figures were also thinking about the what had happened.

‘These two lasted over 5 minutes against such a monster? They were also able to solo this?’

After defeating the Relic Guardian, Sohank immediately participated in the battle with the Immoral Prince. When he approached the 3 minute mark of the battle, he thought about the battles conducted by Hyrkan and Shir. It was a superfluous thought that had nothing to do with the current battle. This meant he was having a hard time concentrating, and on top of that, it meant Sohank's exploit against the Immoral Prince was about to come to an end.

‘I have no idea who the monster is now.’

Chev had bought 3 minutes and 44 seconds against the Immoral Prince before he needed a break from the Battle. He thought about the battle conducted by Hyrkan and Shir. He was blown away as he thought about the previous events.

In the end, these two men were simultaneously feeling the same emotions.



‘Shit. this is a really fucked up situation.’

‘I never expected to be in such a miserable state.’

They thought about it.

They felt regret, then they became depressed.

They were justified in thinking that they would become heroes in this Raid. They had been so sure about how they’ll perform on this stage, but now they were found lacking. It was a situation where they felt the worst kind of misery that they could have imagined for themselves.

Moreover, the two men weren’t the ones that brought the end to the Immoral Prince.

“Prince Dean!”

Maeung had appeared to put an end to the Immoral Prince’s mutiny.

14.

Bulkas Ranger’s Captain, Maeung

He had formed the Secret Society, and he had fought against



Corrupted beings, who misused the power of Corruption. In the end, the naked face of Prince Dean was revealed behind his mask. Maeung, who had worked tirelessly with his life on the line, suddenly appeared in front of Prince Dean. The Users were surprised by Maeung's appearance, but no one held misgivings about it.

“We'll just observe the situation.”

“Just continue the live broadcast. Don't put in any other audio. Just make it so that their conversation come through. Turn off the commentaries too.”

Sohank and Chev also looked on as spectators.

They had a sour stomach when they realized they couldn't become the main character of the climax. Still, they couldn't disrupt the event by speaking unnecessarily. They couldn't bring attention onto themselves during the climax. Several million people were watching this, and if they messed this up, the spectators would react more strongly than being upset in their stomach.

“In the end, you decided to drag me down by the ankles, Maeung.”

“There was good cause for me to grab onto your ankles!”

While being viewed by everyone, Prince Dean and Maeung spoke



their true feelings about each other.

“You were like this from beginning. You never trusted any words spoke by me. You always held everything about me in suspicion.”

“As I’ve said, I had good reasons to distrust you.”

They were NPCs.

In the end, the lives they led were mere set-up to the game. Everyone was well aware of this fact.

Still, all the spectators couldn’t help, but have their emotions shaken by the story behind these two NPCs. Everyone focused their attention on them. In the back of everyone’s head, they knew these two were NPCs, but none of them trivialized the conversation occurring in front of them.

– Yes. It seems Maeung was suspicious of Prince Dean from an early age.

– It seems Prince Dean was a useless scum since he was young.

There were people that even empathized with the situation.

“You even let it slip to my father that I’m not cut out for kingship.”



“I was sent to live my whole life in the Bulkas mountain range, because of it. That was the cost exacted of me for saying those words. I’ve spent a large portion of my life at the Bulkas mountain range, and I’ve regretted my actions for a long time. However, I don’t regret it anymore. I was right. You aren’t cut out to be the king. You will not succeed the throne of the Havanz kingdom.”

Koohng!

In the midst of the conversation, Prince Dean stomped his foot on the ground. The ground shook. It was as if an enormous golem had stepped forward. The ground let out a brief cry. Everyone, who had been focused on the conversation, became startled.

“The throne does not need a succession! I’ll climb to the top of the throne using my strength!”

Prince Dean yelled out, and the people, who were surprised, felt a chill go up their spine.

This was how terrifying Prince Dean’s shout was.

However, Maeung didn’t back down from his voice.

“Are you still dreaming, Prince Dean? The only dream you will have from this point on is a nightmare. Wake up. Please wake up from this dream. The Archmage Bokaan gave you the name of Dean. I want you to realize the meaning behind your name!”



Dean.

The name signified a sense of duty one had to perform alongside the martyrs. It was to drive out the nightmares that had visited this world.

Prince Dean possessed such a name, and Maeung's word delivered a critical blow to Prince Dean that was more potent than any weapon used against him.

“Do not look down upon me!”

Prince Dean's eyes were burning with flame, and it made one's blood freeze. As everything drew to a close, Prince Dean's body started to burn.

Hwah-roo-roo-roo!

Prince Dean's skin started to melt. Then the enormous power that flowed underneath his skin was revealed. It was the power that had made Prince Dean into a transcendent being. This power erupted into flame. His power was on a rampage. Endless black flames exited from between Prince Dean's armor.

In the end, his armor started to melt too.

Finally, the last scene had begun.



Prince Dean was disintegrating, and now time was his biggest enemy. Even in such a situation, Prince Dean aimed his sword towards Maeung. He planned on using his remaining time to kill Maeung.

However, Maeung didn't back down from Prince Dean's action. Maeung also raised his sword, and he pointed his sword toward Prince Dean. Their stances were like a mirror image of each other.

They held their swords up, and they eyed each other. Any further words would have no meaning.

The battle between the two started.

Kah-ahng, kah-ahng, kahng!

The battle ended after the sound of steel clashing rang out thrice.

Ddooohk, ddooohk!

The arm holding his sword was entirely melted, and Prince Dean's arm in its entirety fell to the floor. Finally, Prince Dean's knee melted, and he was on his knees. Black liquid was oozing out from the openings in his armor.

This was how Prince Dean was vanishing.

Maeung looked at Prince Dean as he spoke.



“This isn’t why I taught you the way of the sword. How did you get onto the path of Corruption?”

“I won’t ask for forgiveness from anyone. If you are looking for me to regret my actions, don’t expect it.”

The words were spat out by Prince Dean, but his voice was different now. His voice was diminishing rapidly.

It seemed Prince Dean would only be able to speak a handful of words. His voice continued to thin out. One wouldn’t have been able to hear his word if one wasn’t nearby and listening really closely.

Moreover, Maeung also didn’t have much to say to Prince Dean.

“People live behind only their names in death. Dean. Please leave behind something that befits your name.”

However, Prince Dean didn’t give an answer. A feeling of desolation flowed out of him. This feeling lasted for a long time. It lasted for so long that the people started thinking. The Immoral Prince was about to greet death without saying anything. It felt like Prince Dean wasn’t going to say anything.

With this thought in mind, everyone started to relax when it happened.



“Everything started from the Ruined Kingdom. Everything will end there too.”

After leaving behind his last words, Prince Dean caved in on himself.

[The Immoral Prince has met his death.]

[The Corrupted Army is no more.]

Another era had come to an end. However, all the people present were still tense.

The Immoral Prince was dead. However, the ending to today's battle hadn't come to pass yet.

The one that'll put the period at the end of this battle wasn't Maeung. The main characters of Warlord wasn't the NPCs. It was the Users. Maeung moved across the stage to find the User that'll bring this battle to a close.

Maeung headed towards a User that was weakly leaning up against a tree. He stood in front of Hyrkan.

Hyrkan had succeeded.



He had contributed the most in stopping the Immoral Prince's Corruption. He deserved the right to bring this era to a close. Everyone in Warlord, and viewers around the world acknowledged this fact.

“You did well. When I saw you for the first time, I thought this task was too much for you. However, in the end, you were able to delay the fall of this world.”

The only thing left was Hyrkan's answer.

His answer would be a period at the end of this event. Everyone focused on Hyrkan's mouth. What would Hyrkan say in such a situation? Would he say lines that would stoke the romanticism of this current situation? Or will he leave behind a long-lasting message? Or maybe he would speak in a playful manner. Maybe his last words will make everyone smile a little bit at the end.

While everyone was focused on him, Hyrkan opened his mouth.

“Huh? It ended? Did we catch them all? Huh? Maeung? What the hell?”

In many ways, his words would remain forever in the history of Warlord. The period was put at the end of this episode.

15.

It was a bright office. In most offices, half the lights would be



turned off to save cost of electricity. However, this office wasn't like that at all. It was as if the occupant wanted to use 100% of his lights. The inside of the office was brightly lit.

The owner of the office was talking busily into the phone.

“I asked for a Warlord exclusive V-Gear two weeks ago from the Peach Store. So why haven't I heard anything even though I contacted them two weeks ago? Report to me the name and position of the man, who turned me down. I'll negotiate directly with him.”

The owner of the office was young. At the very most, he was in his mid thirties. He was a man with blonde hair, which had been shorn close to his scalp. He looked like a martial artist. The region above his eyes were protruding as if it had been rearranged by fighting over a long period of time. He was a memorable man. If one was being nice then he was memorable. If one was speaking bluntly, he looked menacing.

This menacing man was named Tobi Gwynn.

He was Tobo Soft's founder, and he had made Warlord. With the big success of Warlord, he had experienced a meteoric rise when Tobo Soft set its IPO. His name was now amongst the billionaires of the world.

“I'll say this again. Don't speak as if you are satisfied. I want you to be on the offensive! I don't want the other game companies and contents companies to catch their breath! I want you to make it so



that anyone, who enjoys Warlord will go to the Peach Store.”

Tobi Gwynn was nicknamed the Hungry Man. He had a cherished opinion that a man should always be hungry.

Of course, he was very busy. If he had nothing to do, he made up work to do. That was his personality. This was why all his business was done at the office. He didn't even want to travel to different locations to meet others. He was very stingy with his time.

This was why he could do everything he wanted inside his office. If needed, he could use the V-gear to speak to others in the virtual reality. If that was too annoying to do, he could create an augmented reality environment in his office for meetings.

What was worse was the snacks he had piled up on the corner of his desk. It seemed his meal time was too precious to waste too. If someone who didn't know him saw his office, one might think this was an office for a snack export business.

This was why most board members and major shareholders rarely had the opportunity to meet Tobi Gwynn. There was only one person he spoke face to face with on a regular basis.

Ddok ddok!

When he heard the knock, Tobi immediately ended the call even though the conversation hadn't ended.



“Enter.”

The door was opened instead of a reply. A very tall, lanky and black-haired Asian man entered.

“The Immoral Prince Raid was completed not too long ago.”

Tobo Soft’s Steering Committee Team Leader Chen.

This man held a post that was quite rare. When most businesses expanded, they kept their planning team, and this team was divided into the strategic planning committee and the management committee. It was very rare for a business to have a steering committee on top of those two.

This man held a rare position, and he was also the only one that could get a direct audience with Tobi. In many ways, Chen was a unique man.

“How long did it take?”

“It took them 49 minutes and 35 seconds.”

“Amazing. Even in our fastest estimates, the report said it would take at least 70 minutes... Let’s see... They finished it 30% faster than expected. Normally, a 30% error or is it a mistake.... No, it can’t be a mistake. Maybe I should call the result to be bullshit. ”



Instead of answering, Chen placed a thick report on Tobi's desk.

In this day and age, he was still using paper reports. Tobo Soft was a cutting edge technology company, so it was very hard to come across a report such as this.

“I've organized the data relating to this Immoral Prince Raid.”

Tobi didn't look at the report.

“We didn't do our job right. The report probably spells that out, but that is all I need to know. To sum it all up, we were incompetent. Am I right? Do you have a problem with my assessment?”

Instead of answering, Chen lightly bowed his head. He was so tall that when he bowed his head, it was more striking. It felt as if his apology was a bit more sincere.

However, when Chen raised his head again, his face was unapologetic. There was no indication that Chen was troubled by anything that had happened.

Instead, he immediately placed a new report on Tobi's desk. Tobi eyed the new report. The report was much thinner than the one before. If one counted it, it was only 15 pages. Tobi turned his eyes towards Chen.

“This is a proposal for a new project.”



“A new project?”

“Yes. The methods we have been using up until now isn't working. Our existing strategies will be discarded, and I believe we have to come up with new methods.”

Tobi nodded his head lightly.

“A new project. I like that word. Isn't that a word used by motivated people? Isn't that right?”

Tobi immediately read the content of the report. No, Tobi didn't read the report. He just looked over it, and in a flash, it was stored inside his head. After saving the 15 pages inside his head, he closed his eyes. He was now earnestly reading the content of the report.

Tobi opened his mouth when he read the content of the report.

“We will lose 2 more months from our estimated time period.”

“To be precise, it'll be 61 days. I am aware of it.”

“Do it.”

When the answer was given, Chen immediately took the reports handed to him by Tobi, and he left the office.



When Chen disappeared, Tobi started tapping his forehead with his hand. The expression he had on his face as he tapped his forehead was ill-matched with the bright atmosphere of his office.



# Chapter 137 – If You Set It On Fire, Blessings Will Come Your Way (1)

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1.

– Huh? It ended? Did we catch them all? Huh? Maeung? What the hell?

The footage ended after 3 seconds. The footage faded out as if it was a mirage. Then two Users appeared afterwards.

It was Amohng and Ken. These two characters were known to have the most popular Warlord-related Ranking show, and their lips were twitching. It was as if they were trying to suppress their laughter.

“.....if we have to pick the best scene of the year, I’ll pick this scene without hesitation.”

Pfffft!

As Ahmong was speaking, Ken couldn’t help, but let out a laugh. Ahmong followed his example. He started to laugh too.

“Don’t be like this, Ken. I’m barely holding it back.”

“I’m sorry. Ah. It really is funny. I’m not saying the scene itself is funny. The situation itself was so ridiculous that I couldn’t help,



but laugh.”

“It happens sometimes. An event is so absurd that it is funny. Did you watch it live, Ken?”

“Of course, I saw it live. I was frozen for a brief moment when I saw this scene.”

They exchanged some words, and they were able to regain their cool. After they let out an appropriate amount of laughter, they continued their conversation.

“In many ways, it was a very memorable scene. There are some, who think the scene was staged as an attempt to put his name in the headlines. What do you think, Ken?”

“If this scene was really done on purpose, the Hahoe Mask should immediately take off his Hahoe Mask, and he should go straight to Hollywood. If so, maybe we’ll see him in the Oscars next year. Even Al Pacino couldn’t pull off this kind of acting.”

“Well, we’ll immediately start our Ranking Show. First, let us check who came in 1st in the Paid Video Sales category. The owner of the first place is....”

– Huh? It ended? Did we catch them all? Huh? Maeung? What the hell?

In a flash, the 3 second video was replayed again.



Pffft!

Ken once again let out a laugh. Ahmohng kept poking at Ken's side. Afterwards, Ken was barely able to read his lines.

“Yes. The hero who earned 1st place by recording a sales of 101 million is the Hahoe Mask in the Immoral Prince Raid.”

At that moment, Ahn-jaehyun was watching Ahmong and Ken's Ranking show, and he was massaging his eyes with his two hands. He wasn't massaging his eyes from being tired.

‘This is driving me nuts.’

This shameful clip was something he wanted to forget, but it was being replayed in front of millions of people. The hands over his eyes were also a method to avoid looking at the replay. Of course, it was a preposterous way to avoid looking at it.

‘Shit. Of all the things....’

At that moment, Ahn-jaehyun once again reminisced on what had happened.

Maeung's appearance had been foretold. Although, it was a bit of a surprise that Maeung chose to end the Immoral Prince. It was a scenario where he had expected Maeung to show up when the



Immoral Prince was close to death. He had expected Maeung to give a clue about the ruined kingdom.

However, he never expected Maeung to search out the Hahoe Mask after it finished its business.

No, he didn't have the mental capacity to worry about such a thing. The Immoral Prince Raid had been very hard, but Ahn-jaehyun had been close to his limit even before the Raid. To face the Immoral Prince, he had to reach level 180 as fast as possible.

Moreover, he had wanted to work in secret behind the Red Bulls, so he had stopped receiving help from the Red Bulls' level up support team. Afterwards, he hadn't had time to rest. When he reached level 180, he had to recover the Items he had put in Item Storage. His personal attention was also needed for coming up with the Item Setting he would enter the Immoral Prince Raid with. He also had to check each of the Item Setting of his Skeleton subordinates.

The Hahoe Mask's goofy response was an appropriate reaction. It was a great feat in itself that he hadn't logged out by falling asleep.

However, no one was aware of his situation. The world thought the Hahoe Mask was talking in a half-asleep state at the most important moment in the Raid. Still, people focused on it, and they really enjoyed that scene.

Ahn-jaehyun's gibberish from his lack of sleep had already hit the Warlord related fan sites, and it was being circulated as an



animated gif. Moreover, the footage appeared in any article, interview or video related to the Immoral Prince raid.

There were even some Users in Warlord that used the word ‘Huh Maeung’ instead of saying a greeting or thanks. If things turned out unfavorably, Ahn-jaehyun’s shameful past had a chance of becoming a part of the lexicon of Warlord.

‘The image I built up until now was destroyed, because of a short 3 seconds clip.’

Hahoe Mask.

He was stronger than anyone else. It didn’t matter what trouble he was in, the Hahoe Mask solved the problem with his own strength. He was an extraordinary hero, yet he had become the butt of a joke in the span of a single day.

“Aigo…….”

Ahn-jaehyun let out a moan. He was letting out a moan, but at the same time, it indicated that Ahn-jaehyun was full right now.

He had gained everything he wanted.

Ahn-jaehyun had earned everything he was able to earn in the Immoral Prince episode.



He had gained a level 200 Chronicle Epic Item. It was currently the strongest Item in existence. Moreover, there were merely 10 of these Items in circulation. It was the ultimate Item, and it wasn't something that could be bought with money.

He had also gained numerous Titles. Ahn-jaehyun had gained the two Titles he had coveted forever. He gained the 'Havan Kingdom's Hero' and 'Arbiter of Corruption' Titles. These were precious Titles that couldn't be earned any more. On top of it all, he had gained the 'Hero of the Great Battle' and 'Defeater of Argardo' Titles....

He had earned a lot.

However, the biggest jackpot for him was the profit he received from the Paid Video Sales. The Immoral Prince Raid was seen live by over 5 million people. However, there were a large portion of the viewers that hadn't been satisfied with the live broadcasts.

It was to be expected. Usually, a normal live Raid broadcast needed a lot of preparation and planning. When preparing for a raid, one had to be mindful of where to place the cameras, and one had to know which shots looked good. There was a separate group of people that had to get ready for the Raid.

However, this Immoral Prince Raid had developed too suddenly, and everything had been rushed.

The appearance of the Hahoe Mask was especially a surprise. In such a situation, they weren't able to properly broadcast the Hahoe



Mask's exploits. This was why a lot of people were disappointed. However, the Hahoe Mask had his own footage, and a video was made using his contents. Their disappointment turned into anticipation as they waited for the Hahoe Mask's version of the Raid. Ahn-jaehyun hadn't move with that much forethought, but the anticipation felt by the people was immediately proven through the number of sales.

In just a week, the sales of his video moved past a million!

In terms of Personal Paid Video Sales, the only one who had been able to sell over a million in one week was the First One. The Hahoe Mask was the first to achieve this feat since the First One. His revenues were incredible. The price for his Paid Videos was \$4.99. Of course, the Hahoe Mask's share of the money was in the hundred thousands of dollars.

Ahn-jaehyun had just gained the crowning achievement one could reach in the game of Warlord. Currently, Ahn-jaehyun was in a far better place than the time before he returned to the past. He was shining brighter than the time before he had gone to war with the Stormhunters.

This was why he couldn't complain about this embarrassing event.

Ahn-jaehyun was cognizant of his situation.

He peeled his two hands off of his face. Then he put on his glasses over his slightly more relaxed eyes.



He looked at this Tablet PC.

– We will be announcing the guild ranking for the 30 great guilds. This topic always sparks a fierce debate, so we are qualifying it beforehand. Ahmong and Ken's Ranking show uses 15 criteria to determine the ranking of the 30 great guilds. This ranking isn't an official ranking, and we aren't a credible source for such information.

He focused on Amohng and Ken's Ranking Show, but the light in Ahn-jaehyun's eyes was a little bit different from before.

2.

The end to the second Main Scenario Quest affected a lot of people. The people, who were interested in Warlord, became new resident of the game. On the other hand, there were those that had lost interest, and they left the stage called Warlord. Then a vital change happened regarding the 30 great guilds.

A crucial decision had been made.

This truth was acknowledged by regular Users and Warlord fans, who weren't part of the 30 guilds.

– Let's be real about it. Even if they are all called the 30 great guilds, isn't there too much internal differences amongst the guilds?



– I feel the same way. I think they should make a large scale changes to the live channel rights. In truth, some of the 30 great guilds don't deserve the live channel rights. Some of them are even worse than the Fighters guild.

– If you look at Amohng and Ken's RanKing show, the Fighters guild moved past the bottom of the 30 great guilds. They moved past the Big Smiles guild in terms of quality in their Guild Ranking.

– ⊥ For real. In truth, does the Big Smiles guild have anyone that can fight better than Pitbull?

– ⊥ Don't look down on the Big Smiles. They are still one of the top guilds in the 30 great guilds in terms of views.

– ⊥ Their view count is inflated since China has a lot of people. Is that really something to be proud about? How many people purchase their pay-per-view videos? Can they even sell 500,000 live tickets any more?

During the Corrupt Count episode, a good number of guilds participated in the Main Scenario Quest. The evidence of this fact was shown when the Corrupt Count's identity was revealed in the Corrupt Count Raid. A large portion of the 30 great guilds was present in the Corrupt Count Raid. However, only three guilds had made an imprint on the Immoral Prince episode. Aside from these three guilds, the other 27 guilds pretty much took on the role of sidekicks.



If so, what will happen in the 3rd Main Scenario Quest? The guilds had started to distinguish themselves from each other in the Immoral Prince episode.

Currently, there was the three guilds that was considered to be the Big 3. What did the other remaining guilds have to do now?

First, they couldn't avoid doing the Main Scenario Quest. In the Main Scenario Quest, one needed a good understanding of the game, a good information network, and monster hunting ability. It was the surest measuring stick that allowed a guild to show their capability.

If a guild avoided doing the Main Scenario quest, one needed a sure content that'll allow a guild to be self-sufficient in its survival. In reality, only the Sweepers guild and the Geicoff guild was able to do this.

In such an environment, the V&V guild was the first one to attempt a change.

3.

Before he connected to Warlord, Ahn-jaehyun always searched for articles related to Warlord. Of course, Ahn-jaehyun's attention was focused on the reorganization plan announced by the V&V guild.

‘What the hell is this?’



Ahn-jaehyun knew there were going to be changes. He had expected it. If they didn't change, they would inevitably be culled. Ahn-jaehyun insisted on watching Amohng and Ken's Ranking Show to gather information about the public trends.

In fact, this had also happened before Ahn-jaehyun returned to the past. When the Immoral Prince episode ended, all the guilds went through an overhaul. It didn't matter if it was a big guild or a small guild. The outstanding Users were scouted, and the trading of Users between guilds, which had been considered a taboo, started to occur.

‘The team name is..... Poker? Is it in reference to the card game?’

With that in mind, the V&V guild had started to consolidate the disorderly organizations under their banner. The guild's core power were being gathered into one team.

However, Ahn-jaehyun didn't doubt the reasons behind their actions.

Instead, he was impressed by their bold initiative. Guilds were most definitely a for profit organization. If one joined and worked for a guild, one would expect personal gain in the process. If not, no one would stay in a guild.

Each of the 30 great guilds easily had over a thousand guild members. If the guild wanted to guarantee some profit for everyone, the guild had no choice, but to diversify their activities.



However, V&V had just gave up on that. They had decided to focus their efforts on a single purpose. This would surely mean that the profit gained by the regular guild members would decrease. It also meant that a good number of guild members would leave the V&V guild. They wouldn't be able to avoid internal strife. If this was a company, it would basically be a restructure. They were willing to go through a grinding pain, and it deserved respect. They were willing to go through the pain in pursuit of some unknown purpose.

‘Their naming sense is shitty... However, the content of their plan isn't bad. No. I'm surprised the V&V guild went through with this decision. I'm pretty sure they weren't like this before.’

From Ahn-jaehyun's perspective, the V&V guild was making the right decision.

Red Bulls, Stormhunters, and Hydra.

These three guilds had become the Big 3, and these three possessed the most powerful tools. If one didn't have a tools that was as strong as theirs, one couldn't covet what the Big 3 owned.

Moreover, the Team Poker that was being formed by the V&V guild was structured different from the primary Raid teams of the other guilds.

It was as the named indicated. The Poker would branch into 4 classification. It'll be the Spade, Heart, Clover and Diamond. The



members will be labeled starting with Ace and it would end with King. There would be a total of 52 Users, and three Jokers would be added in. The final tally was a total of 55 people. A normal primary Raid team had between 20 to 30 members. The Poker were much numerous in number.

On the other hand, they weren't only going to do Raids. They would be like a swiss army knife in terms of their use in the game.

Ahn-jaehyun couldn't find any fault up to this point.

‘Why is there so many bastards here that I don't know?’

The problem was the new members that were added to the newly unveiled Poker Team of the V&V guild. There were faces that people from the outside didn't recognize. They didn't recognize the two Users that occupied the seat of the Aces.

Of course, Ahn-jaehyun couldn't remember all the faces he had seen in this world. Moreover, his memory was on the poor side. If he was to spell it out more bluntly, he probably didn't know the faces of the Rankers more so than knowing them. However, this time not all the faces was unfamiliar to him.

– V&V guild made an incredibly resolute decision. Still there are a lot of faces I've never seen before.

– I don't think they were with the guild before. I checked their career data, and it says they worked as normal users.



Aside from Ahn-jaehyun, many people were interested in V&V Guild's reorganization. They became suspicious when they saw faces they didn't recognize.

– They are normal Users? What are their level?

– Huhk? Level 200? What the hell? Their levels are on par with the Rankers.

The bigger problem was that the V&V guild had tried to minimize the backlash for their actions. This was why they posted the Specs of the new faces, and their Specs were much better than an average User. They were all over level 200, and the state of their main Item Setting and the Titles they possessed wasn't just above average. It was world class.

The part that bothered Ahn-jaehyun the most was the number of Titles they possessed. It was an incredibly high number.

The least of them had 150 Titles and the ones with the most had exceeded 200 Titles.

When leveling up quickly, it was hard to earn the necessary Titles. On the other hand, if one focused only on gaining Titles, the time one needed to invest in leveling up decreased. If one wanted to gain both at the same time, one had to be like Ahn-jaehyun. One had to map out how one will get the Titles, and the most effective Level Up route had to be planned.



Of course, this was possible for those in the 30 great guilds. They had the intelligence network, and there were those who helped to gather title for guild members.

If this was the case, the explanation given by the V&V guild clashed with the conventional wisdom. They couldn't be normal Users.

‘They have that many Titles yet they are normal Users? Bullshit.’

There was no way they were just normal Users. The number of Titles they have are impossible to achieve unless they received help from an organization that was on par with the 30 great guilds.

‘That bastard showed up last time. It seems these bastards appear every time there is a lull. Are they part of some professional guild that nurtures Users?’

Anyways, it seemed an unknown organization had appeared, and they were Ahn-jaehyun's new enemy.

Ahn-jaehyun's face hardened.

Stormhunters, Hydra, Red Bulls and others....

He never thought any of them were easy enemies. However, they were enemies that he could see.



However, at that moment, an enemy that he hadn't seen before had appeared in front of Ahn-jaehyun's eyes. This enemy wasn't in his memory.

Of course, he felt anxious.

The fact that he had accomplished a lot made his anxiety higher. Ahn-jaehyun had too much things to lose now.

‘.....if I become lax, they’ll take it all away from me.’

On the other hand, this anxiety allowed Ahn-jaehyun to come to a decision.

‘So my immediate path to a Spec Up.... The Skill Books are the only way.’



# Chapter 138 – If You Set It On Fire, Blessings Will Come Your Way (2)

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4.

[Great Battle Hero's Sword]

\*Main Properties

- Unique-rank Item
- All Stats increased proportionally to level
- All Stats +155
- Required Level : level 180

\*Sub-properties

- When equipped, 20% increase in damage afflicted to the monsters
- When equipped, beneficial Skills will last 30% longer
- When equipped, 10% increase in the effect of the beneficial Skills
- This item reverts to its owner.

\*Miscellaneous

- It is a weapon given to heroes, who distinguished themselves in the Great Battle. It contains the prayers for your active role in the battle against.

[Arbiter of Corruption Ring]

\*Main Properties

- Epic-rank Item



- All Stats increased proportionally to level
- All Stats +100
- All stats +33
- Required Level : 200
- Required Condition: Title ‘Arbiter of Corruption’

\*Sub-properties

- When equipped, damage received is decreased by 10%.
- When equipped, all damage given is increased by 10%.
- This item reverts to its owner.

\*Miscellaneous

- You fought against the Power of Corruption. This is a ring made for the one that judged the Power of Corruption.

[Deposed Prince’s Sword]

\*Main Properties

- Epic-rank Item
- All Stats +300
- Class related Stats +300
- Required Level : level 200

\*Sub-properties

- When equipped, 25% of opponent’s defense will be ignored
- When equipped, all damage will increase by 25%
- When equipped, damage received is decreased by 25%
- When equipped, all Skill cool time is decreased by 25%
- When Skill is used, the consumption of Magical Power will decrease by 25%



- This Item cannot be destroyed.

- This item reverts to its owner.

\*Miscellaneous

- Bayan Dean Un Northland's Item was melted by Blacksmith Olf, and he made this new weapon. The mysterious power possessed by the relic of ancient times was imbued within it.

After Hyrkan finished the Immoral Prince Raid, he received the three Items in succession.

Then the Item Options of the Items he had received was immediately revealed online.

- Hul.

- Huhk.

- Fuck.

The reaction regarding the three Items were honest. The reactions seemed a bit bland. However, everyone were too surprised at that moment. The Item Options were beyond what they could have imagined. It was incredible. It made one think the Option was copied from a different game. This was the reason behind their reaction.

This was especially true for the 'Deposed Prince's Sword'. The



response was very hot, since there were only 10 of them in existence.

- Isn't the Options on the Deposed Prince's Sword a cheat?
- This isn't some additional Stat Options. They slapped all the Percentage Options on it.
- Fortunately, these Items can't be traded. If it could be traded, I would have died from an ulcer in my stomach.
- ⊥ Even if it was possible to trade it, I wouldn't have even been able to buy it even if I sold my house.
- ⊥ I think one needs to sell a building instead of a house if one wants to buy it.
- What level Boss Monster would one have to catch to create a Unique Item with comparable Options?
- ⊥ I think it would have to be at least level 250.

There were only 10 of these Items in existence. People were also having a hard time accepting this fact.

Hyrkan was the main beneficiary of receiving these incredible Items, so it was nearly impossible for him to Spec Up through purchasing Items now.



This was also true in regards to his Skeleton underlings' equipments. He had already put on the best possible Items for his Skeleton underlings before he had faced the Immoral Prince. All their weapons were Unique Rank Items. On top of it all, the Skeleton Knight was equipped with the 'Black Cobalt King's Sword'. It was an expensive Item that even wealthy Users balked at the price.

This was why there was only one avenue he could pursue to Spec Up using his money.

'The level 150 Curse Skill [Curse Infection] is worth 20 thousand gold. The market price for the Skill Book [Malignancy Curse].... It is worth 50 thousand gold?'

He was at the Item Depository. It was the location where one could receive one's purchased Skill from the auction in real time. This was why this location was filled with Users.

The Hahoe Mask he normally wore was off. Hyrkan was in disguise as he came here with his original appearance. Hyrkan had a big frown on his face. It had been caused by the market price of the Necromancer-related Skills that were put up on auction.

'The market price for the Curse Monk Skill is insane. They want 50,000 gold for a skill book. Crazy Bastards.'

Currently, the only way to visibly Spec Up through money was to purchase more Skills. Hyrkan was well aware of this fact.



However, when he was faced with the prospect of purchasing these Skill Books at market price, he suddenly became parched.

He had made the resolve to improve, but these Skills were too expensive.

“Shit.”

‘At least, there are high level Curse Skills available for purchase. The other Skill Trees....’

The Curse Skill Books were expensive, but at least, they were on sale. There were no Skill Books up for purchase for the Summon Skill Tree and the Body Reinforcement Skill Tree.

‘Do I have a choice, but to buy the No Name Skill Books?’

In the end, he was left with one solution. He’ll purchase the No Name Skill Books, and he’ll activate them!

‘The market price for a level 150 Skill Book is around 5,000 gold. The level 160 No Name Skill Books are worth 10,000. The level 170 No Name Skill Books.... There are none.’

This was the method that had been used by Rich Lich. At the time, Rich Lich was the pioneer for the Necromancer Class, and he bought up all the No Name Skill Books until the market dried up.



This was how Rich Lich gained his skills. Of course, he wasn't able to gain all the Skill he wanted.

The No Name Skill Books were a lottery ticket.

When the Skill Book is activated, one had no idea which Skill would pop up. If one was lucky, one could get a Rare or Unique Rank Skill. However, it mostly gave normal Rank Skills.

Of course, it was more expensive than a normal Skill book. The ones above level 170 couldn't even be purchased, since there was no supply.

‘Well, this is normal.’

This wasn't anything out of ordinary. The No Name Skill books usually appeared as a Dungeon Reward. Currently, the Dungeon hunts were enjoyed by Users under level 170.

On the other hand, the Users over level 200 only participated in hunts that were conducive to efficiency. They refrained from Dungeon hunts. If one was already over level 200, it meant your growth speed was abnormal. This basically meant one's process in leveling up so fast was also abnormal. The Users over level 200 right now didn't enjoy the process of playing this game.

They were just going through the motion to reach the result they desired.



‘I’m the crazy one for expecting to find a Skill Book over level 180.’

The pinnacle of this abnormal process was represented by the First One Sulwoo and the Hahoe Mask Hyrkan. At the very least, Hyrkan didn’t have the right to complain about the current situation.

“Hoo-ooh.”

After he calmed his breathing, Hyrkan discreetly clicked on the No Name Skill book.

Hyrkan’s hand hesitated when a new window saying, ‘Will you purchase this?’, popped up.

‘This is driving me nut.’

He knew the price of Skill Books were expensive, and he also understood the reason behind the high price.

However, he didn’t jump the gun on his decision. A Skill Book purchase was different from purchasing Items. One couldn’t resell it. When the Skill was gained, it was instantly consumed.

It was already overpriced in the first place, and there was a chance one would be pouring money down the drain. If a person had a good head above their shoulders, one wouldn’t participate in this waste.



Of course, Hyrkan would hesitate. It meant he was of sound mind.

On the other hand, those who operated at the highest stage of Warlord almost never paid the fair price as they proceeded to conduct wasteful purchases.

Hyrkan was struggling with his decision. In the end, it meant he had reached a stage where he wouldn't be able to survive if he didn't spend recklessly.

‘Bring it on.’

At that moment, Hyrkan touched the Hologram Window.

5.

Level 150 No Name Skill Book x 10.

Level 160 No Name Skill Book x 5.

He spent a total of 100,000 gold. He would have never fathomed in the past of using such an enormous amount of gold. Hyrkan lined up the purchased Skill Books at the corner of his Item Storage, and he activated the Skill Books one by one.



[The Skill Book's identity is revealed.]

[Will you learn the Bone Spear Skill?]

Hyrkan unconsciously let out an exclamation when he saw the first result.

“Wow!”

Everyone's gazes headed towards Hyrkan, who had let out an exclamation. However, their gazes didn't stay long on him. Hyrkan wasn't wearing his Hahoe Mask. If he had let out an exclamation with his Hahoe Mask on, the atmosphere of this place would have become markedly different. Some would approach Hyrkan to find out what had happened, and they would have been surprised when they saw what Hyrkan had gained.

It was that good.

‘Bone Spear. Isn't this a very good skill?’

It was a level 150 Summon Skill named Bone Spear.

It was the upgraded version of the Bone Explosives. It was similar to the Bone Explosives in the fact that bones were consumed as ingredients when making it. The bones could be made into spears, and these spears could be thrown. It wasn't an AOE attack. It was a



targeted attack. In terms of pure attack power, it was much higher compared to the Bone Explosives.

Moreover, it was possible for the Skeleton Warriors to throw the Bone Spears. If several dozen Skeleton Warriors could throw the Bone Spears like javelins at the same time....

‘This is my day!’

The thought of it gave him goosebumps.

Of course, on the other hand, he would be expending much more money every time he used the Bone Spears compared to the Bone Explosives.

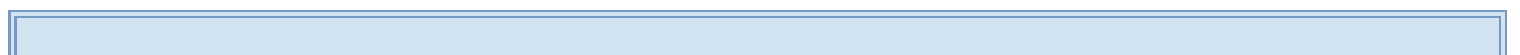
However, Hyrkan didn’t worry about that part right now.

He had gained a hard to acquire Skill on the first try!

Hyrkan’s expression had changed for the better.

‘I have a good feeling about this. I’ll just activate it all right now.’

The price he had paid in purchasing the Skill Books were no longer inside Hyrkan’s head. Hyrkan immediately activated the second Skill Book.





[Will you learn the Curse Resin Skill?]

Hyrkan's bright expression dimmed a little bit.

‘.....I should have expected a dud. It could have been worse.’

Hyrkan wasn't flustered. He calmly activated the third Skill Book.

[Will you learn the Curse Resin Skill?]

“Fuck!”

A curse word came out of Hyrkan's mouth. Everyone's gaze turned towards Hyrkan again. However, their gazes didn't last long. Instead, there were a little bit more sneers directed at Hyrkan. Games were all like this. Many people felt joy from other's misfortune.

‘Why the hell is the Curse Resin coming out twice!’

Curse Resin.

It was a level 150 Normal Rank Curse Skill. It's effect was simple. It creates a Resin that'll apply a Curse if touched.



In a vacuum, the combat effectivity wasn't too bad. Usually, Curse skills had a condition one had to fulfill to get it to work. Basically, one had to pierce through the other's defensive gear. The wounding of the flesh would have to occur if the Curse was to work. In the case of Voodoo Pictograph, he had to stick to the enemy, and he had to draw out a character. With this in mind, it was more easier to splash liquid onto one's enemy to activate the Curse.

However, none of the Curse Monks used the Curse Resin Skill. They didn't use it even if they had learned the Skill. When the Skill Proficiency was at Rank F, the Curse effect was decreased by 40%. It basically meant the Skill shouldn't be used until the Skill Proficiency was increased. However, one couldn't raise the Skill Proficiency if one didn't use it.

Moreover, there was a Skill that was better version of this one. There was a level 160 Rare Skill where a Cursed Puppet was summoned. This Cursed Puppet automatically sticks to its target, and it places a Curse on the target.

This was why the current market price of the Curse Resin was only 500 gold!

Hyrkan got fucked over two times in a row to the tune of 4,500 gold.

'It can't happen a third time. Can it?'



Hyrkan activated his 4th Skill Book.

[Will you learn the Curse Resin Skill?]

Hyrkan got fucked over three times in a row to the tune of 4,500 gold.

6.

‘I bought 170 thousand gold, and now I have about 30 thousand gold left....’

He kept the Skills he needed, then he put the other Skill Books on auction. Hyrkan’s expression wasn’t that great.

Of course, it couldn’t be great. He had invested over 100 thousand gold into purchasing 15 Skill Books, and there were merely 2 Skill that was useful to him. In the end, he had to use 70 thousand gold to purchase the [Curse Infection] and the [Malignancy Curse] Skills. This basically was a concession that meant he wasn’t confident that he’ll be able get those Skills through the No Name Skill Books.

Fortunately, he was able to gain two Skills named [Bone Spear] and [Black Heart]. In the case of [Black Heart], it was a Skill that Hyrkan really needed. However, it would be difficult to use it in battle immediately. The efficacy of the Skills weren’t that great



compared to the Magic that was consumed. It would be something he could use in a pinch, but it wouldn't be used as one of his main Skills.

‘A good first draw always leads to a worse draw.....’

Hyrkan became silent for a brief moment.

It was true that he had succeeded in his Spec Up. However, it didn't feel great. He felt crappier than the time he bought the Life Vessel skill for 100 thousand gold.

This was to be expected. Even if a person was very wealthy, it didn't feel great to lose money at a casino.

When a person is confronted with this situation, the person had two choices.

He could frown then he could just chalk this up as a shitty day.

Or.....

‘The gold I currently have... I have around 15 thousand gold.’

Since he already started this, he should see it to the end.

At that moment, Hyrkan didn't show an inkling of hesitation. He



was like a trained assistant that quickly bought Items from auction. He purchased the level 160 No Name Skill Book for the price of 12 thousand gold. Since Hyrkan had already purchased all the No Name Skill Books worth 10 thousand gold, the only Skill Books left were the overpriced ones.

However, Hyrkan didn't see 2 thousand gold as money anymore. He had already spent close to 200 thousand gold right now, and the two thousand gold wasn't enough to break his streak of purchases he made in spite.

Hyrkan immediately purchased the Skill Book from the Auction House. Hyrkan received the sent Item through the NPC at the Item Depository. He placed his palm on top of the Skill Book.

Several Users had been watching Hyrkan activate his Skill Books. They snickered as they saw a process that had been dubbed the Skill Gamble.

‘That User’s eyes are about to flip backwards.’

‘It seems another User will give up on this game.’

‘If you gamble in this game, you’ll bring ruin to yourself.’

The Users started to feel joy from Hyrkan’s misfortunes. However, their expression changed when they saw the expression on Hyrkan’s face.



‘Huh?’

‘What the hell?’

Hyrkan’s surprised expression started infecting the faces of the surrounding Users.

At that moment, Hyrkan couldn’t help, but yell out.

“The [Chivalry] appeared!”

7.

- Clover team will move aside and the Spade team will move in.
- They are fast.
- Yes. If we maintain this speed, we’ll finish the raid with 6 minutes.... Ah! When I started to speak, player Hoka rushed in!
- He is going for the winning move. It seems he will attach himself to the Blood Ogre’s body to cause direct damage. It seems he wants to decrease the completion time.
- Isn’t that dangerous? Isn’t it safer to do Damage Dealing with magic?



- He is trying to decrease the time.
- What? Even if we keep the same pace, wouldn't we be able to achieve the new record?
- From my perspective, he isn't just aiming for a new record. He wants to achieve a new record time that no one dares to challenge again. He wants to show the pride of the newly formed Poker Team of the V&V guild. I think this is the meaning behind his actions.

Blood Ogre.

It was a level 190 Boss Monster. When its blood colored hide was drenched with the blood of a User, its ability increased. Currently, it was one of the top ten most difficult Boss Monsters to appear in Warlords. It was a monster amongst monsters.

- Ah! The Blood Ogre just fell! The Raid is over!
- It is a new record of 39 minutes and 44 seconds.
- The V&V guild's Poker Team shaved off almost 10 minutes from the record of 48 minutes and 21 seconds set by the Stormhunters.
- This proves it. The V&V guild's Poker team won't get pushed around by the Big 3's primary Raid teams.

The monster kneeled in front of the newly arrived monster.



# Chapter 139 – If You Set It On Fire, Blessings Will Come Your Way (3)

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8.

Black Cobalt Zombie Warrior.

It was a monster made from the corpse of a level 160 monster called the Black Cobalt Warrior. It was level 170, and it was much stronger than the Black Cobalt Warrior. The Black Cobalt Warriors liked to move in a small group of ten. However, the Black Cobalt Zombie Warriors liked to form a group of 30 at the very least, or a group close to a 100 at the most.

This wasn't ideal for a small party hunt. One needed a large party or even a guild's hunt team. One needed that level of firepower to hunt these preys.

Yet a single person had challenged such a group.

However, this single User didn't face off against the Black Cobalt Warrior Zombies by himself.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, ddul-goo-ruhk!

The fearsome Zombie army would make anyone hesitate to attack it, but the group of Skeleton Warriors were beings that had forgotten about fear.



They had formed up in three ranks.

There were 3 lines, and each line held 10 Skeleton Warriors. Each line was differentiated by the equipments worn by the Skeleton Warriors.

The first and foremost line were lined up with Skeleton Warriors wearing pretty thick steel armors. It was hard to even identify them as Skeleton Warriors. They were wearing full plate armors. They wore hefty armors, yet the weapons they were holding looked much heavier. It was a weapon called a morning star, which had a heavy ball at the end. It also had thick spikes, which was especially impressive.

The second line wore red scaled armors, and it reminded one of Dragon Scales. There was a round wooden shield in their left hand, and they held a very wild-looking scimitar in their right hand.

The third line of Skeleton Warriors wore leather armors. It looked to be very well tanned. The green colored leather was very slick. It was quite mysterious in that the green colored leather kept blending into the surrounding vegetations. It made their presence dim. The Skeleton Warriors wearing the green colored leather armor didn't have any shields equipped. Instead, both hands held various types of sword.

As the finishing stroke to the group, two Skeleton Knights surrounded in Bone Armor stood in the front, and they looked like the eyes of a fire dragon.



There were two instead of one.

Each of the two Skeleton Knights raised swords that was overflowing with a sense of presence. The two swords looked the same, but they differed in color. One was pitch black, and the other was shining with light. This was the only difference between the two Skeleton Knights. There was no difference that could be seen in what they intended to do.

The two Skeleton Knights opened their mouth, and they let out the world's most silent roar.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, ddul-goo-ruhk!

Accompanying the roar, the first, second and third line moved in order after the Skeleton Knights.

Ooh-uh-uh! Ooh-uh-uh!

However, the Zombies didn't retreat at the appearance of the Skeleton army. When one became a Zombie, one lost all fear and rational thought. They had no reasons to retreat.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, ddul-goo-ruhk!

The Skeletons also didn't know fear. The two groups were immune to fear, and they displayed their attack capabilities to



their hearts content.

They didn't know what retreat was, and even if they knew what it was, it wouldn't be allowed. The two groups clashed against each other.

The line made contact with the other line. It was a clash between the two front lines. There was no defense here. The two lines rammed into each other as they attempted an all-out attack.

The weapons swung by the Black Cobalt Zombies, and the morning stars swung by the Skeleton Warriors was aimed at each other.

Their aim was the same, but the difference in result was stark.

Hoo-ooong!

The Black Cobalt Zombies swung their weapons in a wide arc, but their weapons only split empty air. The Skeleton Warriors wearing thick plated armor was lightly dodging their attacks.

Bbi-uhk!

After they dodged the attacks, the Skeleton Warriors in the front line swung their morning stars towards the head of the Cobalt Zombies.



All ten Skeleton Warriors had been able to dodge the attacks aimed at them, and they struck out. At the same time, they burrowed into the group of zombies. They were basically the shock troops. They ruthlessly destroyed the nearby heads of the zombies with their morning stars.

Then the second line of Skeleton Warriors followed in behind them. These Skeleton Warriors wore Dragon Scale armor, and they swung their scimitars. The headless body of the Cobalt Zombies were causing a problem, so they hacked at the body of the Cobalt Zombies. The Cobalt Zombies that were causing the disturbance was either swinging at empty air or they occasionally banged their sword against the shields. In front of the scimitar's crescent-shaped line, the headless Cobalt Zombies lost their limbs.

When the Cobalt Zombies were mutilated, it was the third line's job to put them down for good. They held weapons in both hands, and they were much faster than a Skeleton with only one weapon. Before the Cobalt Zombies could regenerate, they were diced up. The Cobalt Zombies had lost their heads and limbs, so they didn't have any methods to resist against the Skeleton Warriors equipped with two weapons.

It was a one sided battle!

In the battle, there was a mutated monster that was sending forth the Black Cobalt Zombies.

Ggoo-uh-uh!



It was twice as big as a normal Black Cobalt, and it appeared in front of the Cobalt Zombies. It was over 3 meters tall. It almost reached 4 meters in height, and the sword in the Cobalt Zombie's hand looked like a toy. It was letting out a roar through its rotten vocal cords, but there was a gravitas and a powerful presence within its voice. A horrifying dread was expressed through it.

It wasn't a being that the Skeleton Warriors could contend with.

Chul-kuhng, chul-huhng!

Of course, the Skeleton Knights stepped forward. They were 2 meters tall, and their body was very large thanks to the armors. Unlike the Skeleton Warriors, the Skeleton Knights appeared as they emitted a heavy sound.

Of course, size and sound wasn't the only difference between the Skeleton Knights and the Skeleton Warriors. The way they fought battle was also different. The Skeleton Knights didn't back down from opponents that were much bigger than them.

Hoo-oong!

They dodged attacks....

Ka-ahng!

They blocked attacks, but they never stepped backwards.



Shweeek!

The path of their sword swings were true. It wasn't just sharp enough to cause a superficial wound. It went beyond cutting flesh. The sword showed decisiveness that held the intent of obliterating the enemy's bones.

Kwah-jeek!

The number of swings were low, but the result of each swing was terrifying. The enormous mutated Cobalt Zombie's body was being cut away by the Skeleton Knight's sword. It was as if the Skeleton Knights were cutting a rotten daikon.

Ggoo-uh-uh!

In the end, the normal Cobalt Zombies lasted longer than the mutated Cobalt Zombie.

The anticipated card didn't perform as expected. In terms of a battle, this battle was already lost.

However, there was no retreat for the Black Cobalt Zombies. In fact, they charged towards their enemies. The Cobalt Zombies were being ruthlessly cut down in the front line, and the Cobalt Zombies in the rear was now charging towards the front.



Naturally, the Black Cobalt Zombies started to get clumped up and tangled with each other.

In the midst of this clusterfuck, an enormous flame that was burning ruthlessly coalesced to form a giant.

It was the Fire Golem!

The burning giant didn't have to think about how to attack this group. The Fire Golem belly flopped on top of the tangled Cobalt Zombie horde.

Hwahl hwahl!

The Fire Golem's body started to burn the Cobalt Zombies.

Hwah-roo-roo!

Even as they were burning up, the Cobalt Zombies started using their swords against the Fire Golem. Maybe this was the result of them being unable to feel pain. Their bodies were burning, but the Fire Golem couldn't stop the sword strikes against it by the Cobalt Zombies. The power behind the strikes remained the same as before.

Shweek, shweek!

Parts of the Fire Golem's body was being cut away by the sword



strikes. The severed parts of the Fire Golem fell to the floor.

Kah-ahng!

The severed parts of the Fire Golem's body started to explode, and the fire became larger.

The Black Cobalt Zombies were trapped within the sea of flame, and the Skeleton Warriors continued with their slaughter.

After a brief moment, the scene of the battle started to dim. When the whole world turned black, white letters was placed over this dark world.

[To be continued]

The footage ended there.

‘Nice.’

The video was on full screen, so it filled the entire screen of the Tablet PC. He exited the full screen. Then he checked various things.... He looked at the information regarding the video, and he looked at the reaction given by the viewers.

– Two Skeleton Knights? How?



- I thought it was only possible to summon one Skeleton Knight?
- Is it a bug?

Ahn-jaehyuhn grinned as he read their assessment.

‘It’s a Skill instead of a bug. It’s a Skill.’

Ahn-jaehyun released the new footage for free.

The video was titled Double Knights. It was the first video showing the activities of the two Skeleton Knights.

It was a mixture of the Hahoe Mask’s fame, and the sensational description saying this was the first time this was being shown. It resulted in the views skyrocketing.

In one day, he achieved 8 million views!

However, the thing that made Ahn-jaehyun happier than the view counts was the reason behind the video. It was the [Chivalry] Skill that had allowed him to make this video.

‘As expected, this game gets fun at the latter stages.’

When he summoned the Skeleton Knight, two special abilities were activated.



The Skeleton Knight's Stats increased proportionally to the number of Skeleton Warriors being summoned. When the Skeleton Knights were summoned, the Leader ability increased the Stats of the Skeleton Warriors. These were the two abilities.

However, these two abilities had a fixed value. Even as the Skeleton Knight's Skill Proficiency increased, these two skill Options didn't change. If one wanted to change the fixed nature of these two abilities, one had to obtain two other Skills.

The [Chivalry] Skill gained by Anh-jaehyun was basically like an upgrade software.

The newly acquired [Chivalry] Skill had the following effects.

#### [Chivalry]

- Proficiency : Rank F
- You can summon one more Skeleton Knight.
- With the summon of the Skeleton Knight, you will be able to summon additional (3) Skeleton underlings.
- Each additional summoned Skeleton Warrior will increase the Skeleton Knight's Stats by (6) percent. At most, it can be increased by 30%.

It increased the number of Skeleton Knights he could summon. The Chivalry Skill increased the special abilities, and on top of it



all, it allowed one to summon additional Skeleton underlings.

‘I also have to gain the [Leader] Skill, but at this current time, [Chivalry] is better than the [Leader]’

The [Leader] Skill was similar to the [Chivalry] Skill. It also increased the number of Skeleton Knights one could summon, and it also increased the number of Skeleton underlings too.

‘If I combine it with the [Chivalry] Skill...’

If he could purchase the Death Knight Skill in the future, then he’ll also have to gain the [Chivalric Order] Skill, which also had the effect of increasing the number of Skeleton Knights.

‘Rich Lich was able to summon four Skeleton Knights.’

Rich Lich used this process to be able to summon four Skeleton Knights. He bought numerous No Name Skill boost to gain the [Chivalry] and [Leader] Skills. Then he obtained the Death Knight Skills. He had been able to summon a total of four Death Knights.

However, it didn’t end there.

‘If I can use the Ancient Power to reinforce my Skills.... How many Skeleton Knights will I be able to summon?’

With the appearance of the Ruined kingdom, the new contents



would be released. One will be able to use the Ancient Power to reinforce an A Rank Skill.

Rich Lich hadn't reached this point. He would truly be in uncharted territory.

“Hoo-oooh.”

At that part, Ahn-jaehyun let out a deep sigh.

The Hahoe Mask could still get stronger. This was something that made him feel happy and excited. It was something he was looking forward to.

‘Urugal mountain range..... I have to get over it, yet I have idea how I'll do it.’

However, if he wanted that content, he had to cross the Urugal mountain range, and he had to discover the Ruined Kingdom.

The Ruined Kingdom had to appear for the third Main Scenario Quest to start. Then the second Advancement contents will be released, and the Skill Reinforcement would included. He had to reach level 300, not level 200 by that time. If not, he won't be able to go through his 2nd Advancement, and it would be impossible for him to do the Skill Reinforcement. Of course, he wouldn't be able to gain the Death Knight Skill either.

However, Anh-jaehyun wasn't confident that he would be able to



cross the Urugal mountain range right now.

‘In the end, I’m not sure I’ll be able to do it even if I reach level 200.’

Even if he reached level 200, he wasn’t confident he’ll be able to cross the Urugal mountain range even with the Arbiter of Corruption Ring and the Deposed Prince’s Sword equipped.

Still, this didn’t mean he was kosher with working with others. Ahn-jaehyun had already suckerpunched the Red Bulls guild, who had been amicable towards him. Hydra guild also didn’t look too fondly on the Hahoe Mask. If he had to pick one, who might show goodwill towards him, it was the Stormhunters. However, they weren’t even a viable choice for him.

This was the reason why he could only sigh.

At that moment...

‘Wait a sec.’

Ahn-jaehyun’s expression changed once again. While he was sighing, he suddenly remembered something that changed his expression.

‘The Frozen Kingdom!’



It was the event stage located across the Terube castle walls. It was called the Frozen Kingdom. It was an event stage made for level 200 Users.

‘Why the hell did I forget about the Frozen Kingdom?’

To be precise, there were several event stages like the Frozen Kingdom that’ll give clues as to the existence of the Ruined Kingdom. One would be able to find out that the Ruined Kingdom was across the Urugual mountain range through these events.

From Ahn-jaehyun’s perspective, he already had this information, so he had tried to skip couple steps in the process. This was why he had forgotten about the Frozen Kingdom.

He remembered what kind of place it was, and before he returned to the past, he remembered this stage had been set up for a certain person.... He had forgotten about it for a brief time.

‘I forgot something that is very important. Of course, I can’t leave out the Frozen Kingdom. I have to gain all the benefits from it. I must!’

Then he thought about it again.

Ahn-jaehyun immediately turned his gaze towards his Tablet PC. As a precaution, he planned on searching the web for the Frozen Kingdom. When Ahn-jaehyun swiped at his Tablet PC, the page returned to the previous page. The ranking of the videos appeared.



At that moment, Ahn-jaehyun's expression turned sour. It was the Weekly Warlord Video Ranking, and his video was 2nd in terms of views. This was the cause of his dour mood.

‘V&V guild..... They ain't playing around.’

The V&V guild's Blood Ogre Raid video had been uploaded around the same time as Ahn-jaehyun's video, and it had about twice as many views. Moreover, the footage was worth the interest and praise it was getting.

‘It basically means the newly added Users aren't normal Users.’

Even in Ahn-jaehyun's view, the Team Poker's strength was impressive. This was especially true for the newly added members. Their skills approached the skills of the Matador and the Storm Queen. Basically, they were almost on a similar level as the Warlord's best Strikers.

Of course, this simple fact wouldn't have struck Anh-jaehyun's nerve. The part that struck his nerve was the fact that the face of a User he already knew wasn't part of the new faces.

‘Why isn't the one that tried to kill me amongst them? Wasn't he a guild member of the V&V guild? Didn't he have the V&V guild mark on at that time?’

This fact kept bothering Ahn-jaehyun.



9.

The change that happened in the V&V guild was extreme, and the result of this change was also extraordinary. Until now, the V&V guild had been considered to be the middle of the pack within the 30 great guilds. However, the value of V&V guild's name shot up in an instant from the release of a single Blood Ogre Raid video. They were starting to be judged in the same breath as the Big 3.

This fact had a big impact on the other 30 great guilds. They were already beyond the point where the 30 great guilds could choose to go through a change. They were starting to be forced to change.

However, not many guilds tried to go for an aggressive transformation. If one tried to force a changed like the V&V guild, the guild would suffer bone grinding pain.

However, even if one looked into an organization going through such a pain, there was inevitably a different degree of pain being felt by the Users. Moreover, no one wanted to be the one to suffer the worst of the pain.

Big Smiles guild repeatedly held officer's meetings, but in the process, they weren't able to come up with a clear plan of action. This was the big reason why they couldn't come to a consensus.

“Shit!”



‘They are really looking at me as if I’m some pushover!’

The one, who felt the most pressure, in such a situation, was Apollo. He was a newly minted officer. If one took away his background, he was useless.

It had been implied that Apollo would be forced to make sacrifices.

‘How dare they treat me like this? Someday I’ll take over the Big Smiles guild....’

From Apollo’s perspective, he couldn’t help, but feel depressed at the recent developments. At the very least, he hadn’t paid exorbitant amount of money to be treated like this as an officer of the Big Smiles.

At that moment, someone called Apollo. When he checked who was calling, Apollo immediately answered the phone.

“Hyung-nim.”

Apollo was someone, who only thought highly of himself, yet he called someone ‘hyung-nim’? A very rare greeting came out of Apollo’s mouth.

– Apollo.



“Yes. Please speak.”

The identity of the man being called hyung-nim by Apollo was none other than Brooks. He was an officer of the Big Smiles. He had been the biggest help in allowing Apollo reach the status of officer in the Big Smiles guild. Even after he was put in the officer role, Brooks continued to help out Apollo.

– You must be in a foul mood from the officer meeting, right?

“No way.”

Moreover, he was the only other officer that understood Apollo’s mood.

These were enough reasons for Apollo to call Brooks as his hyung-nim.

– As you can probably see, the inner structure of this guild is rotten. None of them wants to load their guns.

Of course, Brooks didn’t help out Apollo out of genuine kindness.

“Yes.”

– This is why I’m trying to use this opportunity to become the guild master.



“Yes?”

Brooks finally revealed his ambition.

– There is one characteristic that is common amongst the Big 3. All three guild masters hold an incredible amount of power. Look at the state of our guild. We have over ten officers, and it has been a revolving door on who becomes the guild master amongst them. This is why the position of guild master has become marginalized in our guild. This is our guild’s problem.

This was also the reason why Brooks had brought Apollo to the Big Smiles guild as an officer. When one wanted to become a guild master with a strong grip over the guild, one needed a support base.

Moreover, Apollo was well aware of this fact. Apollo wasn’t stupid. He already understood that Brooks wasn’t helping out through pure generosity.

Apollo actually felt better when he was given a deal. He smiled.

“So what do you want me to do, hyung-nim?”

– We are going to induce a guild war. We’ll pick a fight with the Hydra guild.

“What?”



However, the smile he had from his good mood disappeared in an instant.

“The Hydra guild?”

– I’ll tell you the detailed plan after I hear your decision. However, I can guarantee you one thing. If you help me become the guild master, I’ll make you a guild master to one of the sub-guilds.

A guild war with the Hydra guild? Apollo felt a chill run up his spine when he heard those words.

On the other hand, he was being guaranteed a position as the sub-guild master. It was an attractive offer. It blinded Apollo.

‘Brooks hyung-nim isn’t an idiot. He wouldn’t recklessly start a guild war without any preparations.’

“I’ll follow hyung-nim.”

– All right. Before we get to that, I want to introduce you to someone. You probably know him, since you guys met before once.



# Chapter 140 – Across The Terube Castle Wall (1)

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1.

The NPC hadn't reach the status of being a young man. Its youthful appearance was stuck between that of a boy and a young man.

“Are you serious?”

It spoke in a grave manner, which clashed with the delicate voice it possessed.

“Will you really do as you say?”

Even the deep wrinkles that was forming at the top of its face gave off a child-like impression. It diluted the message it was giving.

“Are you really planning on traveling beyond the Terube castle wall?”

It was the captain in charge of the Terube castle wall. It had been loyal subject to Prince Dean. However, it was also a hidden hero of this world, who had fought against the Corrupted monsters. Bagel rejoiced at the offer given by the man in front of it. It was beyond rejoicing. There seemed to be a different reason aside from



happiness that made Bagel suddenly stand up from its seat.

“Ooh-oohk!”

When it stood up, a moan immediately escaped Bagel’s mouth. It was always prepared for battle. Bagel was in its office, yet it was in its armor. This was why one couldn’t see the wound beneath the armor. It still possessed the evidence of betrayal perpetrated by Prince Dean and the White-eyed swordsman Argardo. It still had the sword wound.

Bagel was lucky to be alive. The wound was so severe that it was shocking that Bagel was still carrying out his duties, while equipped in its armor. This was why Bagel didn’t complain about its slow recovery.

“I’m fine. I’m all right.”

When he heard the moan, the guest got up from his seat to approach Bagel. Bagel waved him away.

“I’m just thankful that I am alive. I don’t want to burden a hero like you, because of this.”

The guest put on an awkward smile, and he sat back down. Bagel moved to the corner of its office where its books were organized. It immediately pulled out a book.

“This is something I acquired a long time ago.”



From its outward appearance, the book was thick. However, the book wasn't filled with many pages. The reason being the thickness of each page. The book was filled with woodblocks. Bagel took out the book, and it carefully looked over the engravings on the pages.

“This was before I became the captain in charge of the Terube wall. This was even before I followed him when he became the Guardian of the Northern lands.”

The woodblocks were filled with engravings of a map. Bagel took the book, and he sat atop of his desk. In the process, his heavy armor moved, and it seemed the wound had been disturbed again. Bagel's expression crumpled, but it didn't moan this time.

When Bagel's pained face resolved itself, it took out the woodblocks contained in the book. It started piecing them together as if they were pieces of a puzzle.

As Hyrkan had surmised, the woodblocks were a map.

“This is the map of the Northern land. This was before this era where the endless battle hadn't started yet.”

His explanation was grandiose, but the content of the map was quite poor. Most of the map was drawn in an abstract manner. There was a long road, and there were monsters that were letting out flame next to the road. The mountain was drawn like a big lump of cotton. The trees inside the forest was drawn like doodles,



and there were no markers naming everything. Moreover, the map was incomplete. The top part of the map was missing. It was as if the map's head had been cut away.

“It is a relic from a long time ago, so it isn't perfect.”

Bagel tapped on top of the table as he tapped at the empty portion of the map.

“In the end, I never found out what is here. Moreover, there is no one alive that knows this information either.”

The guest, who had listened to it in silence, finally asked some questions.

What do you think is over there? Do you perhaps know any other information regarding the place?

However, Bagel had heard all the information available, so it let out a long sigh.

“I have my hand full from defending the Terube castle wall. At times, I tasked a subordinate to investigate what was on the other side of the castle wall. However, they just came back with warnings of overwhelming number of monsters, or they went missing. If I wanted a thorough investigation, I would have to lead forth a large army. I couldn't send a large army across the thick castle wall, and through the mysterious barrier to explore the Northern land. This is especially true, since I'll be doing it just to



satisfy my curiosity.”

The guest said couple more words to Bagel. Bagel gathered boths its hand, so it could prop its chin on top. It spoke in that position.

“Yes. It is as you said. The power of Corruption may be... That upright person might have a clue about the power of Corruption. This is why I was curious about what was there in the past. However, I felt I had a duty to find out what was there. However!”

However....

That word was filled with heavy implication. The guest was about to ask a question, but he swallowed the question.

“No one was allowed to explore this place.”

Bagel immediately put on a big frown. It wasn't caused by his wound.

“There are already movements set in motion. A large-scale change is coming. For now, no one will be able to assume the power of the Northern land. In such a situation, no rewards will be given. There will be a ban placed on the Northern land. The Hiban kingdom, and even the Subjugation Association won't lend a hand. This is a search conducted to find the unknown, and there will be no prize awarded. The only way you will be able to receive a reward is to bring back result.”



Bagel maintained its expression, and it immediately asked him a question.

“Do you still want to go to the other side of the castle wall?”

Instead of answering, the guest nodded his head. Bagel immediately got up from its seat.

Afterwards, Bagel worked with practiced ease. It painted ink over the woodblocks, and Bagel placed a white parchment over it. The very rough map was handed over to the guest.

“Be safe.”

2.

“Be safe.”

[Quest ‘Across the Terube Castle Wall’ has started.]

When Bagel said those words, Hrykan heard the Quest Announcement. Hrykan’s expression was twitching right now.

‘Shit.’



He was forcefully trying to hide his expression. It seemed he wasn't trying to hide a favorable expression. It was quite evident that he was trying to hide a negative emotion.

He had a reason for it.

“This is the word I told those before you, who are willingly throw one's body forward into danger for the peace of the world. I will also say those same words to you. Be safe, and I hope you bring hope like before.”

Someone had arrived before him.

‘Some bastard came here before me?’

If one wanted to go to the Frozen Kingdom, this place was the door everyone had to pass through. When Hyrkan arrived at the Terube castle, he was greeted fondly by Bagel. Hyrkan was the Hiban kingdom's hero, and he was the Arbiter of Corruption. Moreover, Hyrkan had defeated Argardo, who scored a deep wound on Bagel. Hyrkan was Bagel's savior and hero.

It was to be expected. Bagel had been a bit prickly in the past, but it wasn't like that at all.

On top of it all, Hyrkan felt uncomfortable when he saw what kind of expression Bagel had on when it looked at Hyrkan. It was as if a young junior was looking at a cool senior with longing and expectation mixed within its gaze. Moreover, the gaze was coming



from a pretty boy, and Hyrkan had never received such a gaze from anyone before. From Hyrkan's perspective, it was beyond uncomfortable. It was close to unsettling.

This was how the conversation had started, and Hyrkan's inside started to feel a wrenching sensation as the conversation continued along.

When the conversation came to an end, Hyrkan's inside had moved on from feeling a wrenching feeling. His inside were in a knot.

‘I don't know who, but that bastard cost me one Title.’

Someone had already met Bagel, and this someone was already headed towards the Frozen Kingdom.

This fact in itself didn't put him in a good mood. No one would welcome the appearance of a competitor.

‘The Noble Walk Title.... It increases one's Stamina by 50 points, yet I lost it to someone else. Before I did my other tasks, I should have come here to get the Quest and Title beforehand. Shit!’

From Hyrkan's perspective, the preceding visitor had stolen a Title that was rightfully his.

‘In the end, I was only able to earn the Noble Explorer.’



The Title 'Noble Explorer' was something one earned when one gained the incredibly important Exploration Quest. It increased one's Intelligence by 25 points.

However, Hyrkan felt wistful at losing the Title 'Noble Steps.'

It was a Title given to the first one to receive the Quest and the Noble Explorer Title. It increased one's Stamina by 50 Points.

He had lost a Title that would have raised his Stamina by 50 Points. This wasn't something he could simply get over by feeling sorry for himself.

'Which organization was it?'

His insides were hurting so much that it felt as if his insides were rotting.

However, his pain shrivelled away when a thought that made a chill run up his spine popped up inside his head.

'Was it perhaps the Stormhunters?'

One couldn't go across the Terube Castle just because one wanted to.

First, one needed a prior relationship with Bagel. At the same



time, one needed to have done a lot of jobs related to the Subjugation Association. If one did a lot of work related to the Subjugation Association, it meant one probably had to catch a hideous amount of monsters.

At this point in the game, the only ones that had the qualifications to start the Frozen Kingdom Quest was the highest Ranked Users.

Moreover, the Stormhunters sufficiently met this criteria. Before he returned to the past, the Frozen Kingdom had been monopolized by the Storm Hunters. This was why Hyrkan was well informed about the Titles. The Stormhunters monopolized the Frozen Kingdom, and they revealed the Titles, Skill Books and Items that were obtained there.

Basically, he didn't discount the idea that maybe some Items were fated to be in the hands of certain individual. He couldn't discount the fact that this was meant to be. At this point in the game, it was quite possible that the Stormhunters were progressing in the Frozen Kingdom Quest.

Moreover, this version of the Stormhunters guild was much stronger than the one that had attempted the Frozen Kingdom.

‘This is driving me nuts.’

“Understood.”



While he was deep within thoughts, Hyrkan was trying to wrap up the conversation, so he spoke the words that would basically put an end to their exchange.

Since he put an end to the conversation, he was about to get up.

“Are you planning on heading there immediately?”

“What?”

Bagel suddenly grabbed Hyrkan.

“It will be a dangerous road. I was thinking maybe you should make a little bit more preparation.... I readied something that’ll help you in your exploration.”

Hyrkan put on an awkward smile.

‘Bagel hadn’t been such a character before... Things are turning a bit weird now that our Affinity is high.’

At that moment, Hyrkan had no choice, but to sit back down.

‘Well, I did kill someone, who had tried to kill him. He wouldn’t send me into a deadly situation without giving me anything. Absolutely.’



Since it said it will give him something, he wasn't going to turn it down. Moreover, Hyrkan had spent much more than he had planned on his recent purchases.

‘Give me a Skill Book. Please.’

After he gained the [Chivalry] skill, he once again purchased No Name Skill Books to gain the [Leader] Skill.

However, the result was a complete loss.

When he thought about that, Hyrkan eventually frowned. He had tossed money into the air. Of course, he wouldn't feel good about it.

“Wait a moment.”

Of course, Bagel didn't know Hyrkan's true feelings. It vacated its seat to get the present for Hyrkan.

When he was alone, Hyrkan once again agonized over his thoughts.

‘For reals. Who was it?’

He kept worrying over it... He was worried he had missed something important.



3.

Natal had his Hologram Window in front of him, and he was looking at something. He was looking at portraits.

“What are you looking at?”

Sohank discreetly appeared behind him. He had shown enough of a presence as he approached Natal. He didn't want to surprise Natal. This was also why Natal was able to answer in a calm manner.

“This is the portraits of the Users that gained the Quest from Bagel after us.”

Portrait.

In Warlord, one could film from all kinds of angle unlike in reality. However, if the Users being filmed had turned off the facial recognition setting, there was no way one could film their faces.

This was why this method was developed. A User that was adept at drawing would draw a portrait after seeing the target with his own eyes.

In Warlord and any other virtual reality games, everything was made possible through cutting edge technology. In such a world, the people who were good with their hands were more valuable. It was ironic that they were more valuable in a virtual world.



Of course, Sohank and Natal didn't care if it was ironic or not.

"So basically the one we are chasing may be in one of these portraits."

"Yes."

The appearance of the Users that had a face to face meeting with Bagel was saved. This was to gather information on their competitors beforehand.

"Fortunately, there aren't anyone famous here."

"If you say we are fortunate, we are fortunate."

If there had been a famous face amongst them, there was no downside in being vigilant against the famous User. Still, even if they were unknown Users, there was a chance they might become a big competitor. There was no reason why they shouldn't gather information on everyone like this. It might not matter to any other guild, but it was very important to the Hydra guild.

They knew the importance of data and information. Their guild used both as weapons.

"This one looks pretty hopeless."



Of course, not everyone was determined to be a competitor. Sometimes, one could discount a person just by looking at his face. One shouldn't be prejudiced when making a judgement in a game. On the other hand, these habits were hard to break.

“Ah. Doesn't this guy look like a real pushover?”

However, Natal wasn't also free from judging a book by its cover.

“I am hesitant to make judgements based on a person's look, but even I think this guy isn't one of our competitors.”

“I feel the same way. Still, it could be possible, right?”

“That is what people who purchase lottery tickets think before they purchase it.”

Natal smirked at Sohank's words.

When he heard Natal's laughter, Sohank discreetly changed his expression. He spoke in a slightly calmer voice.

“This is going to be quite an annoying mission. I'm just here as the muscle, but the rest of eight heads have to assess all possibilities.”

“Isn't that our role?”



“Sometime I wonder if I cause harm to our guild.”

After he spoke those words, a bitter smile appeared on his lips. He was on break, but it seemed Sohank was unable to take a break. It seemed he felt apologetic towards his comrades, who had to constantly use their intellect.

Natal immediately shot down that idea.

“That is the case at all. We can’t do this through our heads only. We were able to get to this point thanks to Sohank-nim.”

“No. We are lacking with just me. In truth, I already know how I measure up to others. If our Stats are the same, I might be able to go up against the Matador, but I know I will lose to the Storm Queen. Then there is the Hahoe...”

The two of them were about to have a more frank discussion, but....

– The monsters have appeared! There are nine of them. I don’t think it’ll be easy.

An urgent voice was heard through the voice talk.

Sohank didn’t finish his words before he started speaking out new directions.



“I’ll be there. Before I get there, put the Tankers at the center, and defend! Don’t attempt any rash attacks until I get there!”

– Yes!

Kwah-ahng!

Before the conversation could end, a terrifying roar rang out. Sohank and Natal moved together. They didn’t have to speak to coordinate with each other. There was no carelessness or leisure in their movements.

This place was a location beyond the Terube castle walls. Even the Hydra guild’s best troops couldn’t be careless. This place was filled with level 200 monsters, and they were of a different quality from all the monsters they had faced before.



# Chapter 141 – Across The Terube Castle Wall (2)

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4.

– How’s the battle going?

“It’s been very rough.”

– How’s the Quest progress?

“We haven’t had the luxury to assess the Quest progress.”

– I guess the difficulty is higher than expected?

“Yes.”

– Did you gain anything?

Natal, who had been having a conversation with the First Head, turned his head. The corpses of the monsters came into view.

They hadn’t butchered it yet, so the corpses hadn’t melted like ice cream. They still maintained their original form. There were a lot of variety of monster corpses. At a glance, he could see 7 types of monsters. It was hard to find any common characteristics between them. They were all distinct.



The most eye-catching one was the giant that was almost 5 meters tall. It had a single eye, and its skull was shaped like the head of a hammer. It looked bizarre.

The next monster that caught his eye was a 2 meter tall monkey that had a paper thin body. Its body looked so skinny that it was reminiscent of a wooden branch. Moreover, if one touched its skin, one wouldn't be able to tell the difference between the texture of its skin and a tree.

Then there was a beautiful looking monster that was a stark contrast to previous bizarre looking monsters.

It gave off a brilliant feeling like a crystal. Its claws were crescent-shaped, and it was 2 meters long with white fur. It didn't look like a monster. Instead, it looked like a animal that appeared in myths and legends.

Natal looked over the corpses, and he opened his mouth.

“I did.”

Of course, these different types of monsters hadn't attack them all at the same time. The monsters each attacked on their own, and they had just gathered the corpses to one side.

The reason behind this was obvious. It was for research.



– Should I expect anything?

It was the basic of basics to research about a new monster. A proper video showing how to defeat these monsters had immediately monetary value. It could be exploited. This was especially true for the Hydra guild, since they used information as a weapon. Their ability to gather data was peerless.

This was why Natal was careful in answering the First Head's question.

“You should both anticipate and worry about the result.”

– That's an interesting answer.

Interesting..... It basically meant he wanted an additional explanation.

At that moment, Natal re-winded his memory a little further back. He thought about the time when he decided to investigate the Northland.

It was the end of the Immoral Prince, and the interest of the Users naturally shifted to the third Main Scenario Quest.

Where was the starting point of the third Main Scenario Quest?

North, South, East and West.



It'll be located in one of those directions.

Hyrdra guild decided to focus on two directions. They went North and East.

However, the North held more significance since the Northland was located there. It had been the territory ruled by Prince Dean. If Prince Dean gained power away from the eyes of others, there was a very high possibility that he gained it in Northland where he had been in charge.

This was why the Hydra guild put more meaning and gravity to the North expedition. This was why the Hydra guild's best fighting asset was included within the expedition group. Aside from Sohank, there were 33 other Users included in the Northland expedition team. Their basic battle capability was high, and they were excellent in many other aspects too.

Their Raiding ability was lacking in comparison to the primary Raid team, but in terms of exploring and regular battles, this force was better than the primary Raid team.

However, after a single week into the expedition, they felt as if the stage they stepped onto was too much for them. The monsters here were strong.

These were different types of monsters compared to the ones they had faced before. There were a lot of differences on many fronts.



These corpses, which was about to be turned into ice cream, were a prime examples.

This Hammerhead Giant used its hammerhead to use a Head-butt attack. It was a bizarre form of attack. The Deadwood Monkey's camouflage ability was so good that it was chilling. Moreover, it possessed a poisonous stinger. For an opponent, it was the worst possible combination of skills to face.

New methods would have to be devised to defeat them.. Still, in another light, this could drive up the anticipation and fun they would have in fighting them.

The problem was the white furred fox named Crystal Crescent Fox.

“We caught the white furred fox in the forest.”

– Did you kill only one?

“They don't travel in a pack, but we caught three of them.

– So it isn't a rare monster.

“We shouldn't have found it in a forest. They shouldn't be living here.”



Even in reality, beasts were tailored to the region they live in. However, the monsters in Warlord didn't always suit their environment perfectly.

However, most of their characteristics were optimized for their habitat.

The Deadwood Monkey exemplified this concept. It was dressed to function most optimally in forests. It wasn't a rare monster, and he had seen several of them nearby.

The fox basically pointed to a single answer.

– Snowfield..... It is worth being concerned about it.

A monster that should be at a different stage was in this environment through some special circumstances.

What kind of stage goes well with the white fur? A white environment goes well with it.

“Yes. I'm pretty sure a snowfield will appear soon.”

Snowfield.

There wasn't some incredible meaning behind those words. It was a snowfield. It was a sight one could see easily in real life.



However, up until now, no serious amount of monsters had appeared in a snowfield or a desert field. Tobo Soft hadn't officially explained why, but most Users had an idea on the reason behind it.

– You'll be working hard.

“If it's just working hard, I'll count it as a blessing.”

The level of difficulty would be unprecedented.

Let's say there was a person that could run a 100 meters in 9 seconds. If this person ran on a snowfield or a sand pit, how much time would be added to the overall time? It was the same concept for the battles. Unless one is able to fight from midair, the snow or sand would sharply increase the difficulty of a battle.

Of course, the high difficulty wasn't a problem in itself. This would actually increase the fun one would have on this new content. However, if the initial barrier was too high from the beginning, the Users wouldn't even dare to attempt it. This was a problem since the difficulty of Warlord was already high.

Such a content would arrive some day in the future.

Moreover, there was a high probability that they had already reached that point in time.

This was why Natal had said one would feel anticipation and



worry at the same time. A new stage had appeared, and only the ones that could adapt the fastest would survive.

– Then that means you are going to have to work hard.

The First Head was already aware of this truth, so he was brief with his words. He swallowed the words he had been about to say. He had been about to tell Natal about the immense difficulty being faced by the team climbing the Urugal mountain range. Natal already had a lot to worry about, so he didn't want to put extra burdens on him.

“Yes.”

After the call ended, Natal once again looked at the corpses of the monsters. Then he scrolled down his Title list, and he looked at the ‘Noble Walk’ Title.

‘The starting point is the same for everyone. However, I’ve already left the starting line earlier than anyone else.’

He wasn't checking it to see if he still had it. He was looking at it to assure himself.

‘There is no reason why we'll come out behind.’

They had started out before everyone else, so there was no way they could get overtaken. This was the message behind his self-assurance.



‘I have nothing to worry about. I have nothing to worry....’

Natal used this self-assurance to calm his restless heart.

5.

“Javelin throw!”

These were three meter long spears being raised from between the trees. There were 10 in total, and the bearers of these spears were in a formation. They were spread apart forming a parabola. At the opening of the parabola, there were goblins wearing bone armors. It was the Bone Armor Goblins.

Kwah-jeek!

Rough sounds were emitted when bone impacted on bone.

Ggee-eek, ggee-eek!

Afterward, the Bone Armor Goblins let out a cry of anger.

The Bone Spears hadn’t caused much damage. The Bone Armors was made using the bones from other dead goblins. The Bone Armors boasted a high defense.



However, these were made from their treasured fellow goblins, so it was important to them. They didn't want their Bone Armors to get damaged. It was a special characteristic of the Bone Armor Goblins. Their attack power went up as the Bone Armors deteriorated.

Hyrkan was very well-acquainted with this fact. In the past, he had studied all the videos released by the Stormhunters. The memory on how to defeat the Bone Armor Goblins were still present inside his mind.

‘After you rile these bastards up, they’ll go crazy if they see a sandbag.’

At that moment, an enormous turtle charged towards the Bone Armor Goblins at a decent pace. The group of 25 Bone Armor Goblins were so incensed that they had a tunnel vision. They had set their hearts on the Turtle Golem, so they charged towards it.

The result of their actions was revealed immediately.

Poohk!

The weapon in the Bone Armor Goblin's hand were made by sharpening the leg bones of their dead comrades. The Bone Knives were stabbed into the Turtle's shell as if it was slicing into a rotten daikon. In a flash, the Turtle Golem resembled a hedgehog. However, the Bone Armor Goblins weren't satisfied with stabbing it only once. They stuck to the Turtle's Shell, and they started swinging their Bone Knives as if they had gone mad.



At such a devastating sight, Hyrkan didn't show any signs of loss. Instead, he yelled out with a little bit of an excitement in his voice.

“Hardening!”

The Turtle Golem immediately turned into stone.

Ggoohk!

In the process of Hardening, several Bone Knives of the Bone Armor Goblins became stuck in the Turtle Golem's body.

Ggeeeeeeeek!

The ones with their Bone Knife stuck let out a keening cry as they tried to dislodge it.

Ggee-eek! Ggeek!

Even the ones that didn't have their Bone Knives stuck were letting out the cry, and they continued to swing their Bone Knives at the Turtle Golem.

Kwah-jeek, kwah-jeek.

One could hear the Bone Knives chipping away at the stone.



‘They are in a frenzy.’

Every one of them were interested only in the sandbag that had turned into stone. This was when Hyrkan, his Skeleton Knights and Skeleton Warriors moved in.

Hyrkan and his Skeleton subordinates showed them the cost of being distracted.

Shweek, kwah-jeeek, poohk.....

The weapons started causing wounds, and it sounded like a symphony played by an orchestra.

The outcome had already been decided.

All the Bone Armor Goblins received a critical strike. When they tried to change their targets, Hyrkan and his Skeleton underlings ramped up their attacks. He had gained an advantage, so he kept pushing to increase this advantage.

Kah-ahng!

The sound of weapons clashing with each other were heard. However, at some point, the weapons started to impact on living beings. It changed into sounds of flesh parting, and bones breaking.



It took him about 10 minutes to take down 25 Bone Armor Goblins.

[Your level has increased.]

After he ended the short battle, the Level Up Announcement was heard.

‘My level up pace is good.’

This was the 183rd such announcement he had heard.

With the sound of the Announcement as background, Hyrkan smiled as he looked at the corpses of the Bone Armored Goblins.

‘My condition is better.’

He had crossed the Terube castle wall and the nameless lake. He was immediately confronted with monsters over level 180.

Whether it was a large or small monsters that appeared in the past, there had been some common characteristics amongst all of them. However, new monsters were starting to appear with more frequency now. The previous strategies wouldn’t work with them, and new strategies would have to be developed.



However, Hyrkan didn't need to worry about that. Hyrkan didn't need an adjustment time period.

Moreover, at that moment, Hyrkan was feeling something he had never felt before when playing a game.

‘This feels exhilarating!’

After the Immoral Prince episode had ended, Hyrkan hadn't participated in a full-scale battle. He only took down monsters he met as he moved from location to location.

This was the first earnest battle he had participated in a while. When he crossed the nameless lake, he had to use his combat powers at full effort.

Hyrkan was surprised at his own combat efficacy in this battle.

‘I never believed this day would come for me.’

Hyrkan had never thought he was weak. He was a monster if compared to the regular Users. However, every time Hyrkan went into battle he always had to worry about the risk of a Game Over. He always had to weigh the risk of a Game Over to any actions he took. He unconsciously avoided tasks that was risky enough to cause his death.



‘I have no confidence as to whether I can actually die now.’

Currently, he couldn’t come up with a risk that would drive him towards a Game Over.

He had the Earth Golem and Fire Golem. Then there was the 2 Skeleton Knights, and almost 40 Skeleton subordinates that could be summoned!

He had the Magic Power Stat to maintain this ridiculous army, and he could just use expensive consumables to supplement any deficiencies!

Lastly, he was equipped with the Chronicle Epic Items that he would have never dreamed of owning before! He just had to look at his own Specs!

These factors minimized the risk he felt in the front line. The word ‘Risk’ had always been present in his mind, but now he could erase it from his mind.

These were battles without any risk of death. Of course, he would be in a good condition in such battles.

This was like an addicting drug for him.

‘I can step on the accelerator, yet there is no way I’ll crash. I don’t have to drive safely anymore.’



Hyrkan unhesitatingly put a magic recovery Item, which was worth 150 golds, into his mouth.

Bbah-doo-doohk!

He ate it in one bite instead of economizing it.

He didn't need to be thrifty. At this moment, he just wanted to continue this feeling he was having. That was the only thing in his mind.

After he finished his recovery of his magical energy, Hyrkan let out a yell.

“Follow me!”

Hyrkan was the first unaccounted variable for the Hydra guild, who was still far ahead.

6.

Thirty people.

At a glance, one could tell they were equipped with expensive Items, and one could see a Smiling icon somewhere on their body, which identified them.



Big Smiles guild.

They were treated as the weakest in the 30 great guilds, but on the other hand, they still possessed the most guild members. They were still heads above the normal guilds, and they were beings that were high above in the sky for the normal Users.

The guild members affiliated to such a guild had appeared in front of the Terube castle wall.

Thirty Big Smiles guild members were gathered in front of the high castle wall, but none of them were intimidated by the sight.

They had seen this castle wall countless times before. Moreover, there was the hidden rookie, Cho-oohroong, who had conducted countless battles across the castle wall.

Including himself, Cho-oohroong was leading a group of 30.

“We’ve received the Exploration Quest from Captain Bagel. We are allowed to go past the castle wall now.”

Apollo nodded his head at Cho-oohroong’s words.”

“Get ready everyone.”

At Apollo’s words, the 28 Users tilted their bodies to look at a



certain User for a signal. The User receiving all their gazes nodded his head lightly. It seemed Apollo was oblivious to all of this. He continued to speak.

“As I’ve said before, if you lack in skills and you lag behind, we will leave you behind. I want you guys to harden your heart. This is the biggest prey we’ve hunted up to this point. It’s the Hydra guild.”

There was a bloody smile on Apollo’s lips. By the look of him, it seemed he would have taken down Hydra guild if he could do it on his own. Everyone sneered at his attitude.

Apollo’s words made everyone mock him, and it wasn’t a strange reaction.

‘Our guild is in a bad state. Some weird bastard became an officer, and now we have to listen to his commands.’

‘What a pig. I bet he has a lot of money. How much did he spend to buy that officer’s seat?’

However, their mocking smiles disappeared every time they looked at a certain User.

‘Yes. He can only put our trust in him.’

This User’s identity....



‘We just have to believe in Sinclair-nim.’

‘We just have to set up the stage. Then Sinclair-nim will take down the Second Head.’

It was Sinclair.

The second unaccounted variable by the Hydra guild had shown up.



# Chapter 142 – The Frozen Land (1)

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1.

The endless snow that was falling down was swept up by cold winds. It was as if the whole world was shivering.

Hweeeeeng!

The sound of the winds made one's ears numb. The world had turned white, which blinded one's vision. The only thing one could smell was the coldness.

During all of this, a User dared to to step onto the snowfield.

Pooh-poohk.

The white snowfield became the white predator. Accompanying a terrifying sound, the intruder was swallowed up to his knees.

“Fire!”

– I have no visuals at all!

In such a ridiculous stage, Sohank was blocking an Ice Bear with his single shield. It was a 10 meters long bear made out of ice, and it wasn't easy to block it.



‘This is crazy.’

Sohank repeated those words until he was sick of it. He was about to repeat it again, when the Ice Bear let out a roar.

Koo-oh-oh.

‘It’s coming.’

Sohank was nervous, but he readied himself.

Unlike its prior attacks, the Ice Bear used all of its strength to use its Bodyslam.

Ggwah-ahng!

Sohank felt an incredible amount of force transferred from across his shield. Sohank’s body was pushed backwards.

He had barely avoided falling over. He had maintained his stance as he endured the Bodyslam. Sohank busily grinded his teeth inside.

‘It this was a grassy plains, this bear bastard would....’

Ice Bear.



This was his first time facing this monster. It was large, but it wasn't too difficult to face it in a vacuum. Basically, it didn't have any special skills. It also didn't possess incredible strength or incredible Battle AI compared to its size. Moreover, it was fairly easy to maintain the aggro.

The problem was the environment. The snow was up to his knees, and the ground was covered in ice. It thoroughly vexed Sohank.

Sohank could always rely on the ground being steady, but he never expected his lack of footing would make him feel so weak. He became skeptical of the ground he was standing on. He never expected such a thing to happen, and it made a chill run up his spine.

“Fire!”

Sohank yelled out again. He wasn't shouting out an order as the commander of the group. His shout was almost close to a plea for help. In his life as a gamer, Sohank would be hard to find an experience that was as humiliating as the one right now.

– We really can't see anything! If we use our magic, you might be swept up in it!

However, it wasn't easy to help him either. Magicians had to be judicious with their magic. They had to avoid harming their allies. However, the magicians could barely see the tip of their noses. No



matter how accurate these magicians were, it was an impossible situation where they couldn't fully use their abilities.

“Fire!”

However, Sohank yelled out again.

– I'm sending it!

In the end, a magician gave an answer, and at the same time, he threw the ball of fire in his hand forward.

The ball of fire thrown by the magician started to roll forward. As it rolled forward, it started to expand, and in moments, it took the form of an enormous bear.

Koo-wah-ahng!

Flame Bear.

This scary magical spell was charging forward as it melted the snow away.

However, Sohank was the one in the path of the charging Flame Bear.

‘Aigo.’



He was the one that had ordered the use of the magic, but he never expected the Flame Bear to charge at him from his rear.

Sohank took short breaths. The important part will start now. If he did nothing, he would be sandwiched by the two bears.

It was the moment of truth. Sohank moved when he saw an opportunity. The Ice Bear had been continuously ramming into his shield. Sohank lashed out at the Ice Bear with his shield.

Ggwah-ahng!

A loud sound exploded forth, and the Ice Bear's body was shifted slightly to the side.

Koo-roo-roo....

The Ice Bear had been about to let out a roar, but now it was letting out a low growl. It was a sound made when a beast has reached the peak of its anger.

However, when the Ice Bear reorientated its head to express its anger, Sohank had disappeared from its field of vision. When he hit the Ice Bear on the head, Sohank had immediately escaped from his current location.

Sohank had leaped into the air, and he landed on the Ice Bear's



nape.

As he landed, Sohank took out the dagger equipped on his leg, and he stabbed it into the neck of the Ice Bear.

Pah-kahk!

The dagger was planted inside the Ice Bear's neck. It was in only up to the depth of the middle knuckle. It couldn't be considered to be a deep wound.

Koo-ah-ah!

However, it was enough to drive the Ice Bear into a rage.

The Ice Bear suddenly stood up. At the same time, it turned to look towards its back. Sohank was hanging on by grabbing onto his dagger. Instead of shaking Sohank off, it planned on biting him.

Koo-oh-oh!

It was great timing. The Flame Bear threw itself at the Ice Bear, and it swung its paw.

Puh-uhng!

The Flame Bear's front paw let out a rough sound as it violently



struck the Ice Bear's head.

Hweeek!

The Ice Bear's head snapped to the side, and a terrifying claw mark appeared on its face.

At that moment, the Ice Bear's anger wasn't directed at Sohank at all. It was directed towards the Flame Bear. The two bears immediately started to fight each other. The two bears stood on their hind legs, and they used their front paws to strike at each other. Neither bear backed down, but it wasn't a good battle to watch.

The Ice Bear was much more stronger than the Flame Bear. The Flame Bear could only leave scratches and wounds on the Ice Bear's body. The Ice Bear's attacks took chunks off of the Flame Bear's body.

The two bears exchanged about 10 blows in total, and the Flame Bear became mangled. It started to disappear into the snowstorm.

During all of this, Sohank created wounds on the Ice Bear's back and waist. Again, the wound wasn't deep, but the location from where he struck was exquisite. He was at a location where the Ice Bear's limbs and teeth couldn't reach him. He was basically in its blind spot.

From such a location, Sohank yelled out again.



“Fire!”

Instead of answering back, the magicians used more magical spells. Accompanying the incantation of the magicians, fireballs and thunder strikes headed towards the Ice Bear. Moreover, it was also coming towards Sohank, who was sticking close to the Ice Bear’s body.

Koo-oh-oh!

The Ice Bear let out a roar as it struggled. As the Ice Bear flailed, Sohank started to accumulate a significant amount of damage. Sohank continued to attack it to keep the aggro on him.

This really was a gambit where Sohank had put his life on the line.

In such a battle, the rest of the party could do nothing. Natal, who was the leader of this party, didn’t say anything. At this moment, he couldn’t even come up with a word of encouragement for Sohank.

‘Shit.’

Natal couldn’t do anything. He could only regret over his decision.



His regret started 8 days ago. It was when they first arrived at this frozen land. As if by magic, the snowstorm had appeared, and Natal was conflicted as to how he should proceed. He wondered if he should allow the group an adjustment time period before they earnestly started their search. On the flip side, they could start searching first, then they could get used to everything.....

In truth, they planned on following the former plan. They were going to start their search after they got acclimated to this place.

However, the problem was the urgent news he received.

‘If it wasn’t for the Big Smiles....’

The urgent news said a large contingent of Big Smiles guild members had crossed the Terube castle wall.

In truth, this was within the realm of possibilities they had postulated. If one had a decent head on one’s shoulder, it was easy to connect the dot between the Northland and the third Main Scenario Quest.

‘No. If it wasn’t for Sinclair...’

Sinclair was within this group.

He wasn’t known to the world, but he was a User that was on par or better than the officers of the 30 great guilds. He was also a person that had received aggressive love calls from all the 30 great



guilds, yet he was unwavering in switching his affiliation.

Yet he was wearing a Big Smiles guild symbol now. Moreover, Natal received information that Sinclair was one of the figures leading the group. Natal couldn't help, but be thrown into a state of confusion.

This put a lot of pressure on him. If it was just the Big Smile, he could just treat them as a big dog that moved into the neighborhood. However, this was the Big Smiles guild with Sinclair included in the party. A feral beast had just moved into the neighborhood.

In the end, Natal decided to accelerate their timeline in finishing the Quest instead of facing off against the Big Smiles guild.

However, the frozen ground was starting to cause significant delays.

‘If things head along this way, they’ll definitely catch up to us.’

They were in a obstacle race, and they were having a hard time getting past the obstacles. They were pretty much stuck.

Of course, they would be caught by the latecomers.

– We got it! Stop!



At that moment, Sohank's voice was heard in Natal's ears. At the same time, the Priests ran towards Sohank. They used the Healing skills to quickly mend the wounds. Then they started putting the Buff skills on him as a precaution for the unforeseen circumstances that might occur.

“Natal!”

As he was receiving the skills from the Priests, Sohank immediately called out to Natal.

Natal approached Sohank, and he gave orders to his subordinates through Voice Talk.

“Listen! We don't have much time, so we'll be brief in taking footage for data. Once you guys finish filming, we'll immediately butcher the monster. Clean up after yourselves. Don't leave behind any Ingredient Coins.”

“Yes.”

“I'll say this again. We can't leave behind any trace. The Ingredient Coins won't disappear.

“Yes.”

His warnings were almost approaching the level of nagging. Even though, he had given his warnings, Natal didn't look to be in a good mood. His expression was screwed up as he started a



conversation with Sohank.

2.

Poo-oohk!

A wide and nimble sword was embedded deep within the Hammerhead's single sharp eyes. The Hammerhead's body started to shake. It was such a deep wound that the Hammerhead couldn't even let out a scream.

Kooh-oohng!

In the end, the Hammerhead weakly fell to the ground as if it was a large piece of log. A User descended using the fallen Hammerhead's body as a staircase. Sinclair immediately flipped over the Hammerhead's body.

Swhoook!

After flipping it over, he immediately extracted his sword from the Hammerhead's single eye. Sinclair sheathed his sword. It was the surest gesture that signified the end of a battle.

Everyone, who had been watching the battle, let out exclamations.

“Amazing. You are really amazing.”



“Sinclair-nim! You are really incredible!”

Then there were those, who swallowed their exclamations.

‘How preposterous. He just climbed atop the Hammerhead’s head? If it went awry, he would have been swept up in the Head-butt.... I’ll never be able to do such a thing.’

‘I know he has the Items, but it is also his incredible skills. Why haven’t such a skilled User gained any notoriety yet?’

‘Why did such a skilled User enter our guild?’

Of course, not everyone was letting out or swallowing exclamations.

“You did well.”

Instead of an exclamation, Apollo spoke as if he was a noble giving praise to his subordinate. He spoke in a disinterested tone. Sinclair also responded in a disinterested manner. He slightly nodded his head.

Apollo’s expression crumpled a little bit. His presence was being continuously marginalized, so it seemed Apollo didn’t welcome the current situation.



Sinclair also didn't like the situation he was in.

'I know this is a job, but I can't believe I have to lower my head to this guy.'

He had operated without publicizing his face in the past, but Sinclair had been treated with utmost respect and care by everyone as a Helper from the Hands guild. Apollo was nothing if he didn't have his father's influence.

Of course, he didn't look kindly to Apollo holding a role of being his superior.

'Be patient. This will come to an end soon.'

He knew the importance of this job, so Sinclair firmly preached patience to himself.

'It won't be too long.'

After they moved beyond the Terube castle wall, Sinclair led the Big Smiles guild member in a chase after the Hydra guild. They had only one purpose. They were going to start a guild battle against the Hydra guild.

Of course, they didn't plan on fighting a full scale battle. From the Hydra guild's perspective, they weren't keen on a full scale battle either. They would work to avoid that outcome. Reinforcements weren't anywhere near them, and there were no



castles or towns beyond the Terube wall. If they performed a fullscale war, it would be basically be akin to a suicide bombing.

In the end, they'll decide do a 1on1 battle. A great match would ensue, and this was the result wanted by Sinclair.

‘If I kill Sohank, everything will change.’

Sohank was the strongest User in the Hydra guild. What was the worth of winning a 1on1 battle against him?

He had no idea.

It was incalculable, but just the thought of it was enough to make him smile.

A smile formed on Sinclair's lips. One User saw his smile, so the User spoke up.

“It seems you are in a good mood.”

“Huh?”

“Nothing. I just saw you smiling, so I....”

The one that asked the question was Cho-oohroong. He was the one that had built an affinity with Bagel by playing on the



Battlefield stage. He was also the one that was able to receive the Northland Exploration Quest.

Unlike Apollo, Sinclair had a high opinion of Cho-oohroong. Cho-oohroong had helped out Sinclair in various ways, so Sinclair treated him well.

“I’ll be fighting a skilled User soon. The anticipation I have for the fight must have revealed itself through my expression.”

This was why Sinclair revealed some of his true feelings in front of Cho-oohroong.

“As expected, you are incredible.”

Cho-oohroong had an expression filled with admiration as he looked at Sinclair. Sinclair’s smile deepened when he saw this particular expression.

This is what he wanted. He didn’t want everyone to look at him as just some nobody. He wanted them to look at him with respect. He didn’t want to be the expert that only other experts knew about. We wanted to become world famous.

“Sinclair-nim is probably the only one in this game that feels happy about the prospect of fighting Sohank.”

“I’m flattered. However, if I don’t win, this would have all been an act of reckless bravado.”



“No. From what I just saw now, you will definitely win. Of course, this is assuming the other side doesn’t do anything foul.”

The dayy will come soon. Even people, who didn’t know Sinclair, would look up to him!

Sinclair’s smile deepened further. It was so deep that his smile couldn’t get any more broader.

It happened at that moment....

“Uh? There is a Coin here!”

“What?”

The atmosphere suddenly changed. Everyone gathered in a single location when they heard the word Coin.

“Did you just say Coins?”

“Yes.”

“Try picking it up.”

“Here it is.”



Sinclair immediately held the Coin, and he checked the Coin's information on the Holographic Window.

[Deadwood Monkey's Skin]

[Deadwood Monkey's Skin]

[Deadwood Monkey's Bone]

It was the Ingredient Coins from the Deadwood Monkeys.

“Isn't this the 20th one we found?”

“We are finding fallen Coins every time we are about to forget about it.”

“It seems there is a hole in the Coin Pouch carried by the Hydra guild. It seems they are leaving behind a trail.”

Ingredient Coins was a trace that could only be left behind by Users.

“All of a sudden, we are like Hansel and Gretel following after the breadcrumbs.”

Obviously, this tracks was left behind by the Hydra guild. In other words, the Big Smiles guild was on the right path in chasing down the Hydra guild.



However, Sinclair no longer had a smile on his face. He spoke in an earnest tone.

“Let us move faster.”



## Chapter 143 – The Frozen Land (2)

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3.

The blizzard was sweeping across the frozen land, and the blizzard wasn't just satisfied with blinding the intruders.

[A powerful coldness has swept over you. All Stats will be decreased by 10%.]

[After 19 minutes, you will get frost bites.]

[The powerful cold has swept over your armor, and the coldness will decrease its durability.]

[The powerful coldness has swept over you, and your senses have been dulled.]

This had never been experience anywhere on Warlord before. The intense cold was more terrifying than imagined. In this terrifying cold, two Users were facing each other. Sohank and Sinclair ignored the terrifying cold. They held swords that was almost impossible to determine the market prices. These expensive swords were pointed at each other.

This was their second meeting.

Of course, their first meeting hadn't been under such a dire



situation. It had been a long time, since the two had met... They met during the time when the combined level of both Users were barely over level 100. It wasn't a long meeting. They just knew about each other's reputation. Since they were just curious about each other's reputation, they looked each other's face, and they parted after shaking hands. That was it.

There hadn't been any subsequent meetings. Most of the 30 great guilds asked for help from the Hands guild, but the Hydra guild was firm in not negotiating with them. Hydra guild put the most importance on gaining and protecting secrets. Of course, this was the stance they would take.

Even after such a long gap between their meetings, they didn't share any small talks. They were in a situation where they had to kill each other. They had no doubts in their hearts.

Strikers.

They always pierced through whatever that is in their way in the front lines. They was no reason why they should pay attention to their surrounding.

They only had one task to do here.

'I'll kill him.'

'I'll end this.'



They had to find a way to kill the other User. That was it.

4.

There was why this frozen land was so harsh. There was no place to hide from the blizzard. If one stayed still, one would receive a penalty. Moreover, when one reached the point of getting frostbites, one's HP started to decrease. If one wanted a true rest in this frozen land, one had to make a shelter with one's hands.

The method was unexpectedly easy.

Igloo.

One had to gather a lot of snow to make a mound, and one had to dig in like a rabbit. The igloo was surprisingly snug.

Natal was within this snug space, and he felt disgusted at sharing the same space with the User next to him.

‘The new officer of the Big Smiles, Apollo....’

Apollo was standing next to Natal.

‘I remember seeing his portrait, but I never thought he had such a skill.’



To state the obvious, Natal wasn't in the same Igloo as the other man, because he liked the other User.

It had been about two week since the Hydra guild had crossed to the other side of the Terube castle. The Big Smiles guild was close on the Hydra guild's tail. The two groups were within a distance that could be travelled within 24 hours. It took 24 hours for the field to reset. Basically, the Big Smiles guild was able to see the track left atop the snowfield. The chase had basically ended there.

‘At a glance, he just looks like a greedy big....’

The chase was pointless. The only thing left to do was to fight. This was why the two guilds agreed to a guild war.

The losing side would give up on exploring the Northland. Each side would pick a champion, and everything would come down to a 1on1 battle.

This wasn't anything special.

An all-out guild war....

In the past, the Big Smiles and Triple Wing guild had put their existence on the line as they performed a guild war. However, that kind of guild war rarely occurred. However, the guild war that was occurring right now happened quite frequently between the 30 great guilds.



It didn't make sense to fight an all-out battle for an owner-less mountain. It was better to determine the owner of the owner-less mountain through a single combat. This was the most profitable way to come to a decision. At the same time, if the 30 great guilds shed their bloods to claim ownership of this mountain, a third party would be reticent to object to the result.

When the deal was made, everyone except the combatants moved far away from the battle site. If one watched the battle from up close, it would just increase the probability of something disgraceful happening.

Above all else, this was a courtesy given to one's opponents. There would be no recordings allowed for this battle. This wasn't for personal glory. This was a fight for one's organization. There was no reason to clap for the winner, and there was no reason why they should console the loser. The only thing that needed to be recorded was the result of the fight.

'I never expected him to be a genius tracker.'

At that moment, Natal wasn't thinking about the guild war, Sohank or Sinclair. He was thinking about Apollo.

In truth, when Natal received the portrait, he hadn't even known that Apollo was an officer of Big Smiles. Moreover, he didn't want to waste space in remembering him. According to the information gathered by the Hydra guild, he wasn't anything special. He could be ignored.



However, a pursuit team led by Apollo had caught up to the Hydra guild in just a week.

Natal was shocked when he saw the Big Smiles' guild symbol on Sinclair's chest, but the more surprising part was the fact that they had been tracked down so quickly.

“I'm guessing you are a new officer.”

This was why Natal had created this space.

‘I have to find out if Apollo is the genius tracker or maybe it's someone else.... I have to find this out.’

Sohank was fighting for his guild with his life on the line, so of course, Natal had to use his own method to fight for his guild.

There was no way Apollo knew what Natal was thinking. Instead of an answering, Apollo smirked as he slightly nodded his head.

Apollo was overbearing as he sneered at Natal.

‘Does he have something?’

His smile made Natal nervous. Natal was Hydra guild's Eight Head. The User in front of him was a new face to the Big Smiles guild. His position and reputation was all relatively new. There was no reason why Apollo should be looking at him in such an



overbearing manner.

In other words, there was a high chance that something allowed Apollo to act in this overbearing manner.

Natal didn't get mad. He just continued the conversation.

“Your skill is great. I can't believe you guys were able to track us down. There had been a great distance between us.”

“I just chased after someone that was very careless with his pouch. I wouldn't call that as having a great skill. It wasn't hard at all.”

After saying those words, Apollo overtly sneered at Natal. There was no deep reason behind his smile.

‘Hydra guild isn't that great.’

Apollo was able to raise his nose high into the air with impunity against a Head of the Hydra guild. It felt awesome.

‘Careless with one's pouch?’

Natal had the opposite reaction when he heard Apollo's words. From Natal's disordered thoughts, a new suspicion was starting to build.



‘Perhaps?’

Kah-ahng!

The ongoing blizzard was colorless.

Kwahng!

The ongoing blizzard looked drab.

On top of the white snowfield, Sohank and Sinclair was fighting a fierce battle. The snowfield was being greatly disturbed. Sword Energies was sent forth every time the Cool Time ended. The Sword Energies had the power to demolish the ground. No matter how severe this land was, it was impossible to maintain its pristine condition when the sword strikes impacted on the ground.

The harsh lands couldn’t stand up against the sword strikes, and of course, the armors worn by the two Users couldn’t be in a good state after facing such attacks.

At the very least, the armors were maintaining its original shape. The continuous attacks had laid bare the two Users’ arms and shoulders. It was hard to call those parts as being armored. The helmets were also dented and split open.

However, the swords they held were fine.



Both Users had the best weapons one could acquire. They didn't care if they fought with no armor! This was the resolve that befitted the two of the greatest Strikers in Warlord.

However, the part that was tormenting them the most wasn't the damage inflicted by others.

[You are frostbitten. Your health will quickly deteriorate.]

[In 10 minutes, you will be in a critical condition from the frostbite.]

[The coldness will start dominating your body. All Stats have decreased by 20%. Your movements have slowed.]

These wounds could easily be resolved by a Priest's Buff and Heal Skill. However, without the administration of a Priest, the prior wounds were turning into critical wounds.

Moreover, the two had promised beforehand. They agreed not to use any consumables.

'There are too many variables changing on this stage. Nothing good will come from taking my time.'

'I shouldn't wait for luck to shift towards me. I have to end this with my skill.'

The two didn't want to lean on luck. They wanted to resolve this



using their own skills. This was evidence that they were confident in their skills. At the same time, if luck was on the other's side, it would mean the other User had no chance of winning. This was the evidence of how much pressure was on them. One could never predict as to who the Lady Luck will smile on.

The battle continued as no one could easily seize the victory, and they were close to reaching their limits. They unconsciously started wishing for luck to be on their side.

‘I don’t care what it is. I want you to make a mistake.’

‘I can’t lose here no matter what.’

At that moment, luck favored one side.

Kah-ahng!

Lady Luck smiled on Sinclair.

They were swinging their sword, and the sound of steel rang out as their swords collided with each other. Then a goosebump inducing sound like grinding teeth was heard.

Ggee-dook ggeee-dook!

Sohank was starting to be pushed backwards.



Why was he being pushed back?

Instead of questioning his fortune, Sinclair let out a mighty shout, and he started pressing harder against Sohank. Sohank's arms flew backwards without him willing it to do so, and Sohank's chest was revealed. Sinclair executed a Body Slam.

Ggwah-gwahng!

Accompanying the loud sound, Sohank fell over backwards. Sinclair stepped on the chest of the fallen Sohank. He didn't make any small talks. Sinclair reversed his sword, and he brought it down. The sword headed towards Sohank's chest region.

Ggee-ee-ee!

The armor let out a sharp sound. It was the sound of steel being cut.

Poohk!

One could here the flesh being pierced.

When an expert reached their limits, one critical blow was enough to end the User.

'I won.'



Sohank suffered a Game Over. The first one to realized this was Sinclair, and at that moment, he was satisfied.

‘Finally, glory is in my hands.’

The satisfaction he felt was appropriate.

He had fought and won against a tough opponent. Moreover, it allowed him to achieve something he always wanted. He had suffered, and fought hard to feel this senses of satisfaction. Of course, he was content.

This feeling of contentment stole the tension from Sinclair’s body.

‘It’s cold.’

He hadn’t felt the cold before, but now he felt it. It was as if his skin was being cut... No, it wasn’t that cold. Still, it was cold enough that it didn’t feel good.

Sinclair turned his head to look at the raging blizzard. When he pierced through this blizzard, he would return to where everyone had stayed behind. He thought about the glory that would unfold in front of him. There was a smile around Sinclair’s lips.

At that moment, the sight in front of Sinclair’s eyes darkened.





[You have died.]

As Sinclair's world became dyed in black, he heard that short phrase.

6.

Two piece of news was delivered to both Natal and Apollo.

Natal received an apology from Sohank. Apollo received a message from Sinclair saying he's been ambushed by someone.

When they received those messages, both of them smashed through the igloo at the same time. Natal gritted his teeth when he came out into the blizzard.

'We lost everything.'

Sohank had lost. Now the Hydra guild will have to retreat from this frozen land. They'll have to return to the Terube castle wall.

They would be returning without gaining anything!

Natal thought about the time he had invested for this exploration quest. It wasn't a loss that he could just get over after being sick to the stomach.



“Everyone gather!”

Apollo was swept up in his rage. At Apollo’s shout, the Big Smiles guild members gathered around him. Apollo shouted as if he wanted Natal to hear it.

“How dare you screw me over!”

Natal had become despondent, so he was having a hard time understanding Apollo’s reaction.

“We won the match! So why did you take revenge on him?”

Natal thought for a brief moment when he heard Apollo’s question.

In such a volatile situation, Natal didn’t have much time to think. Moreover, the questions he could ask at this moment was limited. Natal worked his brain hard in that short amount of time to come up with the most forthright and effective question.

“Is Sinclair dead?”

“Do you plan on dodging the blame!”

Apollo’s rage allowed the disarticulated thoughts inside Natal’s head to start piecing itself together like puzzle pieces. The



thoughts inside his head started finding its old pattern.

Ha ha.

Natal couldn't help, but laugh.

On the other side, Apollo was getting ready to immediately start a small guild war. It had been a one on one battle. They had won fair and square, yet a third combatant had interfered. Now Sinclair was dead. Apollo couldn't stand idly by.

As the atmosphere was getting harsh, Natal swallowed the sneer he was about to direct toward Apollo, and he spoke.

"It wasn't us."

Instead of answering, Apollo glared at Natal. When they heard Apollo's words, the Big Smiles guild members took out their weapons, and they started their Magic Casting. As if they sensed something was about to go down, the Hydra guild started getting ready for battle too.

"Even if we had lost, we wouldn't have been such an underhanded losers like you."

"Where's the proof?"

"Proof?"



Natal retorted with a question to Apollo's words.

“Do you have proof that we attacked Sinclair?”

“If you look at the circumstances.....”

“You made a judgement after seeing only the circumstances. You only have circumstantial evidence yet you are willing to break the deal by attacking us?”

At this point, Apollo closed his mouth.

“I'll say it again. I accept our defeat. The Hydra guild will pull out of the Northland.”

Apollo's thoughts became complicated as Natal continued to speak.

The victor, Sinclair, had died from a sudden ambush. If one looked at the circumstances, the probability of the Hydra guild being behind the plot was high. Apollo determined the probability to be 99 percent.

On the other hand, the Hydra guild had just admitted defeat, and they were going to pull out of here. It would be foolish to ignore the previous deal to attack the Hydra guild first. It would be a burdensome act.



Moreover, their victory wouldn't be guaranteed by attacking first. It was a situation where the two guilds had lost their Ace Cards, and none of the other cards could guarantee a victory.

In the end, Apollo had achieved the desired result.

‘I gained what I came here to gain.’

He had carried out a guild war against the Hydra guild, and he had won. Apollo's standing within Big Smiles guild would change after this.

In such a situation, he didn't want to force the issue.

‘Did they really not do this??’

Of course, he still had questions. If the Hydra guild hadn't lashed out from their loss, then who killed Sinclair? Sinclair had been clear in his message. He said he had been ambushed.

Was he attacked by a monster? Or was there really a third party?

Natal was the one that resolved Apollo's worries.

“We'll find the answer when we get to the place where the two had fought.”



Apollo yelled out instead of answering him.

“Stand down!”

7.

When the fierce battle died down, the battlefield started to be covered by snow.

This was why when the Hydra guild and Big Smiles guild arrived at their destination, they could barely see the traces left behind by the battle. Instead, they saw the two corpses lying next to each other, and someone was standing over them like a guardian.

It was a single User..... He was wearing leather clothes lined with white fur. In the blizzard, it was hard to make him out. However, Natal knew who this User was.

‘It’s the Hahoe Mask. Yes, if it was the Hahoe Mask....’

There was only one User that would conspire against the 30 great guilds by himself.

“Who are you!”

One didn’t need to ask the question asked by Apollo if one had a decent head above their shoulders. One would be able to assess the



situation.

“This isn’t the first time we’ve seen each other. It’ll be more convenient for me if you are a little bit more quick on the uptake.”

“Hahoe Mask?”

It was as Natal had surmised. The User in front of his eyes was the Hahoe Mask.

The Hahoe Mask had set this up. When he saw Sinclair with the Big Smiles, Hyrkan wanted them to fight Sohank and the Hydra guild. It worked out better than expected. They readily fought each other, and they died easier than he had expected.

At this point, Apollo and Natal diverged in their actions.

“How dare you, Hahoe Mask! Do you think you’ll be fine after you meddled against the Big Smiles?”

Apollo raged.

On the other hand, Natal thought over the situation.

‘He didn’t really have to reveal his role in this. The fact that he revealed himself.... He plans on taking further action.’



Instead of facing the conflicted Natal, Hyrkan dealt with the raging Apollo.

“I don’t have a good relationship with Big Smiles. Moreover, didn’t you try to fuck me over in the past? Now I see you were from the Big Smiles.”

Hyrkan’s finger was pointing at Cho-oohroong. It was impossible to see his face, since Cho-oohroong was wearing his helmet. However, Cho-oohroon unconsciously turned his gaze away when Hyrkan pointed at him. It was to be expected. There was something to feel guilty about.

Hyrkan’s finger slightly moved to point at Apollo.

“I also fought with you before. Your watch went to funding a good cause. Thank you. I always receive contributions from you. I’m sorry.”

“You bastard.....”

Apollo’s body was shaking as he was about to lose his temper. Then Hyrkan’s finger moved towards Sinclair’s corpse, which was lying by his feet.

“Also, I have a personal grievance with this one.”

This was the first time Natal opened his mouth.



“Are you talking about Sinclair?”

Sinclair.

This was the first time Hyrkan had heard Sinclair’s character name. Hyrkan smiled as he nodded his head.

“This guy attacked me with the intent to kill before, but I got him with the Watchman Style.”

Watchman Style?

Everyone unconsciously dwelled upon that word. Several Users had puzzled expression on their faces. Hyrkan saw their expressions, so he answered after glancing at Sinclair.

“If you don’t know what it is, you can ask Sinclair. No, he could be listening to this conversation in real life right now. The watch you gave me was contributed to a really good cause, Sinclair. Thank you. Ah. Also, I want to congratulate you for killing Sohank. You’ll become so famous that it’ll be hard for me to get your autograph. Aigo. I’m jealous.”

As Hyrkan spoke, the Users that were quick on the uptake realized that Hyrkan wasn’t just giving a simple explanation.

“Well, let’s get back to the main topic. Apollo. You said I’ll regret



messing with the Big Smiles. Didn't you say that? From my experience up to this point, I've been pretty much unharmed after messing with the Big Smiles."

It was a provocation.

"In truth, even if I did say I won't mess with the Big Smiles, the Big Smiles guild will still pursue me. I'm about to pass by you, while licking my fingers after a meal. Are you really going to let me just walk away, Apollo? What if I summon twenty Skeletons to dance Beyonce's Single Lady in front of you? Will you just watch? Huh?"

"Son of a bitch....."

It was a clear provocation.

"It doesn't matter if I mess with Big Smiles or not. There won't be any significant changes to our relationship. I guess this answers the question you asked me before."

Hyrkan was creating a situation where Apollo and the Big Smiles guild had to attack Hyrkan.

"I'll immediately....."

It seemed Apollo was unable to hold back his anger. He was about to explode. However, the one to stop the explosion was Natal.



“Hahoe Mask. I’m pretty sure our relationship with you isn’t to bad. Am I deluding myself?”

“Hydra guild has never messed with me.”

Natal narrowed his eyes. Hyrkan gave an additional explanation.

“First, Sohank’s loss was legitimate. Sohank can confirm this truth. I didn’t cause his death.”

‘However, you bastard set it up so that our guild would clash with the Big Smiles guild!’

.....Natal didn’t say those words. He didn’t have proof. Circumstantial evidence wasn’t proof in Warlord. Moreover, the Hydra guild was the one, who chose to battle the Big Smiles. They weren’t pressured into making that decision.

Of course, Natal didn’t plan on backing off so easily.

“Is that all you have to say for yourself?”

Natal once again tried to agitate Hyrkan. Natal gave off the impression that he didn’t care about the lack of evidence. He appeared as if he was going to thoroughly punish Hyrkan.

Up to this point, Hyrkan had a playful atmosphere around him.



However, the atmosphere around him changed drastically at Natal's forceful words.

“If you don't like my answer, then I'm fine with it. I request a guild war.”

He had declared a guild war.

Everyone had a blank expression on their faces. This proposal was too unexpected.

‘Guild war?’

‘Does this mean the Hahoe Mask has a guild?’

However, everyone came to their own answer to those questions.

‘Ah.’

‘Oh my god.....’

What would a guild battle with the Hahoe Mask mean?

“The method of battle will be a group battle. The stage will be here. It will be on this frozen land. The losers will lose all claims to the Northland. The two guilds could attack me in order, or you guys can cooperate with each other. Either option is fine with me”



The Hahoe Mask had just requested a guild war against the 30 great guilds by himself.

This was why Hyrkan didn't need to explain himself any further.

“We'll fight until one side is entirely eradicated.”

Ssoook.....

With those last words, the Skeleton Warriors that had been hiding in the snow started to reveal themselves one by one from behind Hyrkan.



# Chapter 144 – The Frozen Land (3)

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8.

An accident can happen in an instant.

“I accept the guild war!”

Natal was thinking hard to find out Hyrkan’s hidden intent. The rest of the guild members felt nervous and threatened by Hyrkan’s confidence, which bordered on being arrogant. Apollo didn’t bother to think. He felt numb, and he immediately spat out the emotion he was feeling with his words.

“Attack!”

He let out a shout of determination, but there was no substance behind it. Apollo’s shout was met with a more colder reaction than the blizzard surrounding them. Apollo felt desolate, and this feeling of desolation lasted a quite a long time.

Apollo felt taken aback after he spoke those words. Of course, Apollo wasn’t taken aback, because he realized he had a mistake.

‘Why aren’t they moving?’

He had given an order, yet no one was doing anything. This was why he was taken aback.



“I accept the guild war.”

With those words, Hyrkan opened his arms wide.

‘Yes, Apollo. I put my trust in you.’

Hyrkan had opened his two arms wide, and he felt like giving a big hug to the corpulent body of Apollo.

From the perspective of the Big Smiles’ guild members, they could see the armor beneath Hyrkan’s white leather fur coat when he spread his arm wide.

Gulp!

Someone swallowed their spit.

It was the armor worn by the White-eyed Knight Argardo, who had terrorized everyone in the great battle. There was no way they could mistake it for some other armor. There was a black colored blot that moved atop the silver armor like a living carp. There was only one such armor in all of Warlord.

Of course, the sword sheath attached to the armor probably held Argardo’s sword. It was probably the Crying Sword.

These facts in itself gave them a feeling of intense pressure. The



Big Smiles guild members felt overwhelmed, and it started causing them to feel fear.

‘It brings up a bad memory.’

‘Shit. That Item setting is a cheat.’

The Big Smiles guild had also faced Argardo. Most of the members gathered here had participated in the battle with Argardo. None of them directly fought Argardo, but they had seen, felt and heard Argardo’s imposing presence.

The Hahoe Mask was wearing Argardo’s armor.....

‘I don’t want to fight him.’

‘The first ones to attack him will all die.’

Hyrkan was a monster that was much more scarier than most large sized Boss Monsters. How many Users in Warlord would be able to attack Hyrkan unhesitatingly? Moreover, a sacrificial lamb was need in any action they took. No one wanted to volunteer themselves to become the sacrificial lamb.

If one wanted a sacrificial lamb to step forward, one needed leadership and charisma. The leader needed respect from his men. Apollo had none of these traits.



‘They won’t attack me?’

At that moment, Hyrkan looked at the frozen Big Smiles guild members, and he turned his back on them.

‘Uh?’

This was the moment right before the start of a battle.

If this was a battlefield, where one used guns, someone would have already prematurely fired one’s gun.

It was a time when the Hahoe Mask and the Big Smiles would exchange killing intent.

Yet Hyrkan chose to turn his back on them? Everyone blankly stared at Hyrkan’s back. Hyrkan disappeared into the blizzard. They couldn’t see the Skeleton Warriors either.

“What the hell are you guys doing! Get him!”

Apollo once again let out a shout.

“It is an order! Go get the Hahoe Mask! I’ll give a penalty to any bastard, who doesn’t follow my order!”

At this point, his shouts were more of a threat than an order. The



Big Smiles guild members took their time as they moved towards the direction where the Hahoe Mask had disappeared.

Natal let out a bitter laugh when he saw this.

‘Did he plan this out too?’

“Go get his watch.”

“Yes.”

At his words, a single User approached Sohank’s corpse. The wristwatches of Sohank and Sinclair was untouched.

‘If he took the watches, we could have used it as a pretext.... However, there is no way he would show such a weak point...’

Hahoe Mask hadn’t left behind the watches, because he was kind.

From one to ten, all of the Hahoe Mask’s actions had a purpose and preparation behind it.

“Are we going to fight?”

“Fight whom?”

“That.....”



They were still not used to this blizzard raging in this world. In such a world, Hyrkan had prepared leather clothes lined with white fur on the outside. The Hahoe Mask had come out of nowhere, but he was prepared to camouflage himself by wearing that color.

Who in their right mind would want to face such an opponent in a battle?

“We are giving up on the Northland exploration.”

Natal was confident that he strategize a win in a battle against the Hahoe Mask. However, he wasn't confident he could win in this particular battlefield.

“We don't have to add stupidity to our incompetence.”

As Natal said those words, he looked at Apollo, who was jumping up and down in anger near Sinclair's body.

‘He wasn't a genius tracker. He was a patsy that was very easy to use.’

9.

Hyrkan didn't particularly like the snowfields. In the past, he had suffered numerous troubles on the snowfield by the Storm



hunters.

However, it was a different story if there was a blizzard. The blizzard restricted one's vision, and it dulled one's senses. Moreover, there were various additional penalties when one stepped onto this harsh land...

How many Users in Warlord would be able to differentiate Hyrkan's tracks from the tracks of the Skeletons in such conditions?

Moreover, Hyrkan's Skeleton underlings weren't normal Skeletons. They weren't just bones. They were Warriors equipped with expensive Items that most normal Users couldn't even procure.

“Shit! Those are Skeleton Warriors!”

“Be mindful of your surrounding!”

The Strikers and Tankers were carefully following the tracks when they became frightened. It was the moment when their battle with the Skeleton Warriors had started.

“It is an ambush!”

The Skeleton Warriors had been on standby behind them, and they ambushed the Priests and Magicians.



This was the 7th battle that had been conducted abruptly. The score of this battle was 2 vs 10. Ten Skeleton Warriors were crushed, and two Big Smiles guild members suffered a Game Over.

If one went by numbers, it would be a clear victory for them. However, the Big Smiles guild members' faces were frozen like the snow-chilled wind.

“The Priests..... We have one left.”

“One Priest won't be able to cover for all the Users here.”

“We also have only 4 Magicians left.”

Hahoe Mask wasn't amongst any of the enemies they had killed. This fact wouldn't be changed through Magic or even if their Cool Time had been reset. It basically meant they had to fight this battle until their eventual death.

“This is ridiculous.”

A force of almost 30 people was facing off against a single User. This should be ridiculously easy.

However, when they started fighting the Hahoe Mask, they found out that they were the ones that was ridiculously to kill. It felt as if they were the weaker foe that was being dominated.



“What did officer Apollo say?”

“He ranted about catching the Hahoe Mask at all cost.”

“If he wants to catch the Hahoe Mask so bad, he should do it himself. We even had to leave behind a Striker and a Priest to guard.....”

The weak could only complain when placed in a disadvantageous situation. However, this frozen land didn't even allow them the luxury to complain.

“I'm in Cool Time.”

“Cool Time? I'm about to receive the penalty for the Frostbite!”

“I'm in Cool Time. It is out of my hands!”

They were down to a single Priest. It basically meant the number of Users that could receive the Resistance skill had lessened.

The group had avoided any critical penalties thanks to the Buff Skills laid on them by the Priests. However, now they would have face the true character of this frosty land.

“We'll just freeze to death here.”



Despair.

If they had a choice, they wanted to run away. However, they were scared of the guild penalties. They couldn't run away. In the end, the only thing they could do was to protect the Priest and Magicians. They moved the Priest and Magicians to the center, and they clustered around each other. That was all they did.

This wasn't a pursuit. They were just slowly meandering from one place to another.

However, the being that found them was far from being a blue bird. It was a Wyvern Fire Golem with flames surrounding it.

“This is crazy!”

“Shield! Use the Shield Magic!”

This was their first time experiencing such an attack, so they didn't know how to react to it.

Kwa-ahng!

The Wyvern Fire Golem dived towards the ground, and it immediately exploded. There was only a single Shield Magic active, and it acted as an umbrella that blocked the explosion.

However, the only ones that were able to benefit from the



umbrella was 2 Magicians and a Priest.

“Shit!”

Unexpectedly, there were no casualties. This was the Fire Golem’s special skill. The Kamikaze Explosion skill was powerful, but everyone gathered here were over level 160. Moreover, they were a equipped with decent Item Settings.

However, the problem was their formation. It had crumbled. They had created a formation that would have protected the Magicians and Priest, but now they were all scattered.

“Are you guys ok?”

“I’m all right!”

“Did anyone die? Who’s hurt?”

In the midst of the broken formation, the guild members asked each other if they were ok.

The Skeleton Warriors on standby used this moment to throw their Bone Spears with all their might.

“Those are Bone Spears!”



The Big Smiles guild members had been taken aback by the Kamikaze attack. Now they were in a state of panic as Bone Spears flew towards them.

An Ogre Golem, two Skeleton Knights and 15 Skeleton Warriors charged towards this scene of chaos.

“Hahoe Mask?”

“Ah.....”

This time the Hahoe Mask was in the middle of the group.

In the previous seven ambushes, Hyrkan hadn't appeared. However, he was here now, and it was the surest sign that heralded his victory.

10.

“Why couldn't over twenty of them catch a single Users!”

Wiped.

He received the news of this ridiculous result through messages from his dead guild members. Apollo was feeling all kinds of emotions. He was feeling rage, dejection, worry, irritation, etc. He was having a hard time maintaining a sane mind.



He was at a higher level than the time he ran a guild named after himself. He was here with a party consisting of almost 30 outstanding Users. He couldn't believe they were being trampled in such a shameful manner.

Moreover, it was done by the Hahoe Mask, who he hated the most. Apollo decided to avoid facing the reality.

“The 30 great guilds aren't that great. How can they get wiped out by one User?”

As he spat out his complaints, Apollo started to back away. A Striker and a Priest had been left behind to protect him. Cho-oohroong yelled out towards Apollo, who had been about to disappear by himself.

“Where are you going?”

“We failed, so why should I stay in this cold place! We are heading back!”

Apollo accepted this battle as a loss. He planned on just leaving this freezing land.

At that moment, Cho-oohroong was about to speak.

‘Isn't this a battle where it'll continue until one side is completely eradicated?’



Hahoe Mask was very clear in his words. This battle won't end until the other side was decimated.

There was no white flags in this. The only way one could signal defeat was through a Game Over.

Yet Apollo was trying to leave this stage right now?

‘Crazy bastard!’

He could try leaving this place. He wouldn't stop Apollo.

However, will the Hahoe Mask really allow Apollo and his guards to retreat so easily?

Cho-oohroong gritted his teeth. If this was the Hahoe Mask he knew, he wasn't merciful. He hadn't heard a single instance where the Hahoe Mask had shown mercy.

Cho-oohroong's thoughts eventually became reality.

11.

When a news was kept quiet, it usually stayed quiet. However, once a story starts to move, it spreads at an astonishing speed.



The news regarding the fight in the Northland was the same.

The first news to spread was about Hydras guild's Northland expedition.

- The Hydra guild is the first to send an expedition to Northland
- Northland? I thought no one could reach there?
- ㄴ They got there by crossing the Terube castle wall.
- ㄴ I guess everyone will be crossing the Terube castle wall now.

Previously, everyone had a lot of interest in the Northland, but they didn't know how to get there.

‘As expected of the Hydra guild!’

This was the words spoke by others.

- The Big Smiles guild and the Hydra guild fought for the Northland, and the Big Smiles won.

The next bit of news was immediately released afterwards. This shocking news engulfed all conversations regarding Warlord.

The news of the Hydra and Big Smiles fighting for the rights for



the Northland exploration was surprising in itself. However, the fact that the Big Smiles was the victor in the battle was more shocking.

- Sohank lost!
- My god. Who took down Sohank?
- The Big Smiles did it?

Moreover, Sohank was one of the strongest Strikers in Warlord. He was the Second Head of the Hydra guild, and he had lost in a 1on1 battle.

The Big Smiles was considered to be the doormat of the 30 great guilds. One of the critical weakness they had was the fact that they didn't have a powerful ace. The victory of the Big Smiles guild would surely bring big changes to the fate of the Big Smiles guild.

- Sinclair? Who the hell is that?
- It is another new face?

The Big Smiles guild's stock was steeply rising. Most people had guessed that the Northland exploration would be the starting point to the Main Scenario Quest, and the Big Smiles guild had gained the rights to this location.



Moreover, the User that had made this happen was Sinclair. His fame grew. Instead of praise, most Users were feeling nervous at the appearance of such a User.

However, an incident occurred that wiped away this one User's existence off the map.

– The Hahoe Mask fought a guild war with the Big Smiles guild. The Hahoe Mask gained the rights!

– What the hell are you talking about? What do you mean by a guild war?

– Was it a 1on1 battle? Sinclair vs Hahoe Mask?

– ㄴ No. It was 1 vs 30.

– ㄴ One vs 30? Hahoe Mask and 30 Skeletons took down Sinclair?

The Hahoe Mask had become the owner of the Northland.

The Skeleton Warrior holding a bag full of wrist watches, Ingredient Coins and Gems stopped walking.

It had come to a stop, because its owner had come to a stop.



Its owner raised his head, and he looked into the great darkness that could be seen inbetween the blizzard.

The darkness turned out to be a castle wall. It was as if the castle wall was cutting the world in half. It was hard to estimate how long it was. Even the fierce blizzard bowed its head against this castle wall. He raised his head to look up, and it was hard to see where the castle wall ended.

Hyrkan smiled as he saw the castle wall that boasted an overwhelming dignity.

In the end, Hyrkan started walking again.

[You have entered the border of the Frozen Kingdom.]

He heard the Announcements.

[You've earned the Title 'Visitor of the Frozen Kingdom'.]

[You've earned the Title 'Great Explorer of the Northland'.]

[You've earned the Title 'Pioneer of this Era.']

It had been 20 days since he had left the Terube castle wall. The Announcements notified him that he had reached his destination.



# Chapter 145 – Frost Knight (1)

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1.

Hydra, Big Smiles and the Hahoe Mask.

These three participants had created an incident that had never been seen before. Moreover, the reverberation caused by the struggle for the rights to the Northland was so strong that the topic refused to go away after a day had passed.

– So we have to ask for permission if we want to go to the Northland?

– The Hahoe Mask doesn't have a personal site. Do we have to go to his Youtube page, and ask for his permission in the comment section?

– I don't know. In the case of guilds, they keep a fixed schedule regarding the hunting grounds they own. I get the concept of a guild holding the ownership. However, isn't this case a little bit different? We've never had a private User insist on the ownership of a region.

– ⊥ The Hahoe Mask fought and won in a fair manner. So what's the problem?

– ⊥ Didn't the Hahoe Mask ambush Sinclair after he fought Sohank? It wasn't fair and square.



– ⊥ Of course, it is. He fought 30 Users. It was a 30 vs 1 fight, so it is as fair and square as it could be.

– ⊥ In truth, I can't believe the Big Smiles tried a 30 vs 1 fight. I feel a bit bad about the Big Smiles.

– So when is the Hahoe Mask going to upload his video?

Even amongst the common Users, the presence of the Hahoe Mask dominated everything.

The presence of the Hahoe Mask lingered. The Red Bulls guild and 7 additional guilds of the 30 great guilds gave up on conquering the Urugal mountain range. After they abandoned the task, the only challenger left was the Stormhunters guild. However, it seemed they practically ran away from the Urugal mountain after suffering heavy damage. Then there were the stories of the skilled Users that represented the Underfoot guilds. They were receiving VIP treatments from the 30 great guilds. These Users were transferring to the 30 great guilds. Then there was the V&V guild that was continuously rewriting the time records for the Boss Monsters. However, all these news just brushed by the consciousness of the Users. These news wasn't retained in their memories.

– If looked at it in a certain way, the Hahoe Mask might be the warlord.

– Isn't the strongest User in Warlord called the warlord? Doesn't



that mean the Hahoe Mask is the warlord?

- If a warlord appears, does this mean it is the end of Warlord?
- ⊥ Then the Hahoe Mask will bring this game to an end. Do you this the Tobo Soft plans to erase the Hahoe Mask?
- ⊥ Let's stop talking about the Hahoe Mask.

Some were uncomfortable with the excessive interest that was paid to the Hahoe Mask.

There was a scary tornado brewing outside the interest of the Hahoe Mask. However, only a few people realized this fact.

“This is driving me nuts.”

He was so frustrated that a User mumbled out a complaint he shouldn't have voiced. His character name was Strauss, but he was known more by his nickname and rank. He was the First Head. The User was constantly rubbing at his face. He was one of the few people that saw the hidden storm that was brewing.

‘The Hahoe Mask isn't the important story right now.’

The First Head Strauss had heard the news about Sohank's failure and he had received Natal's report. When he heard it, he saw through to the most important issue at hand.



‘Sohank lost to Sinclair. Sinclair now has the Big Smiles’ emblem on his chest. That’s the dangerous part.’

Of course, the First Head was very well informed about Sinclair. Moreover, he knew a lot about the Hands guild. The Hands guild had earnestly started their activities through the V&V guild. The First Head wasn’t surprised by it. He surmised it would happen one day.

However, Sinclair wasn’t the Hands guild expert that represented the V&V guild. The Hydra’s strongest spear, Sohank, was broken by a member of the Big Smiles. When this had occurred, he had thought about the worst scenario that played out like a nightmare.

‘Are they planning on eating the entire 30 great guilds?’

The V&V guild was already in the hands of the Hands guild now.

In a brief amount of time, the Big Smiles guild will also be owned by the Hands guild. Sinclair had defeated Sohank, and he would be treated like a hero in the Big Smiles guild. Of course, the Big Smiles guild will restructure themselves with Sinclair at its core.

Similar events would start to occurring in the other guilds.

What would happen next?



‘Shit.’

These Hands guild members will earn political power and they will start gaining a following. They would be able to crush anyone that didn’t listen to them.

Moreover, the attacks aimed at the Big 3 was very thinly veiled. The Hydra guild had already taken a body blow from the Big Smile guild.

He couldn’t guarantee it would end at this.

‘I shouldn’t have used the Stormhunters as bait when we were trying to catch the Immoral Prince. Instead I should have deepened our relationship.... No. If we had allied ourselves with the Red Bulls or the Stormhunters, they would have just used us.’

In the end, the Hydra guild didn’t have many strong spears in their arsenal. Sohank was really strong. However, if Sohank was excluded, who else was there? If one excluded Chev from the Red Bulls guild, they were overflowing with skilled Users. Aside from the Storm Queen, the Stormhunters had the Storm Princess, Ballista Hatch, and other veteran heroes that had been tempered through numerous Raids. This was why he had tried to form a closer relationship with them. However, this plan became a mess when the Stormhunters guild suddenly attempted the Immortal Prince Raid. It further deteriorated with the appearance of the Hahoe Mask.

As he was about to go mad as his thoughts reached this point, the



First Head started to touch his face again. He ordered his thoughts.

‘Anyways, there’s no benefit in regretting past events. It isn’t as if I can do anything to change it.’

The hands that was touching his face stopped. The First Head thought about the best path he could take going forward.

‘I might have to bet big in recruiting the Whistling Pit Bull. The resources we would have to use would bleed us a lot, but we need a spear that will deter the other guilds from taking our preys. Moreover.... Wasn’t there a User called Challenger Kiyote? He’s making quite a name for himself recently. I have to use this opportunity to rope them in by giving them a VIP treatment.’

Recruiting.

This was the best method that was available to the Hydra guild. However, the First Head let out a sigh when he thought about the cost that would have to be expended in recruiting these Users.

‘I can’t believe I miss my days working at Wall Street.’

He had hated making such calculations, so he had given up his job to play this game. However, this game was forcing him to make similar decisions to his past job.

At that moment, the First Head couldn’t hold back his sudden laugh.



‘At the very least, I have to thank the stars that the Hahoe Mask isn’t part of the Hands guild.’

In a funny way, this thought consoled the First Head’s feeling. It was the fact the the Hahoe Mask wasn’t part of the Hands Guild.

Up until now, he had considered it quite likely that the Hahoe Mask was a member of the Hands guild. Since the Hahoe Mask and the Hands guild weren’t in it together, it was a big relief for the First Head.

If the Hahoe Mask had really been a member of the Hands guild, the Hydra guild’s hostility towards the the Hands guild wouldn’t have mattered.

‘If we can rope in the Hahoe Mask, I wouldn’t have to worry about any of this....’

In other words, the Hahoe Mask was the biggest variable. He was a variable that could mess up the Hands guild’s plan.

‘.....just by looking at his recent actions, it is very unlikely that he’ll enter one of the 30 great guilds.’

Moreover, the Hahoe Mask had announced a guild war towards the Big Smiles on the frozen land. It wasn’t just an announcement he gave to the 30 members that was present there. It was a warning and a challenge to all of the 30 great guilds.



Maybe it was this fact?

The First Head had been full of worry, but at that moment, he was filled with genuine curiosity about the Hahoe Mask.

‘So what is the Hahoe Mask’s ultimate goal? If he simply wanted money and fame, there would have been easier ways to get that.’

What did the Hahoe Mask want to achieve through Warlord?

‘The man doesn’t make any sense to me.’

Even the smart First Head could come up with the answer to that question.

2.

This castle once boasted a splendor that couldn’t be described in words. It wasn’t a splendor given off by a regular castle. At one time, this place was the capital. It had been the most majestic castle of them all.

However, this splendid stage was now in ruins. The castle walls were in horrible ruins, and the buildings across the castle wall was in a miserable state. If one looked past the buildings, one could see the traces of the inner castle walls still left over, but the buildings that was suppose to be protected by this inner wall was in a



pathetic state. Moreover, there were footprints of some unknowing beings filling up the grounds of the inner castle, and this detail accentuated the appalling state of this place. It was the finishing touch.

On top of it all, everything was coated in ice and there was a large layer of snow covering everything. This appalling sight gave off a feeling of extreme sadness, and there was an indescribable shabbiness that was pervasive.

Two groups were using this stage as a battle ground.

One group consisted of Orcs with leathers that had turned pale. Instead of weapons, these Orcs used their sharp frozen arms to attack. The Orcs didn't possess heat, eyes, vitality or vigor of living beings.

The other group facing the Cursed Orc horde wasn't all that different from them. They were wearing very stylish armors, and they held excellent blades that was well-used. However, the most pervasive detail about the Skeleton Warriors was the sure proof of death they possessed.

This was a battle between beings that couldn't die.

None of them could let out any sound, so in a way, one would assume that the battle would have been silent.

Kah-ahng, kah-ahng!



However, the sounds of steels clashing was more powerful than any lame shout or roar.

Moreover, the sound they produced varied immensely.

Kwah-ahng, kwah-ahng!

The swords swung by the Skeleton Warriors were breaking the frozen skin of the Orcs. The sound was cheerful and heavy at the same same time.

Ggee-eee-eee-eee!

The Cursed Orcs were frozen solid, and they were sturdier than most swords. Their sharp arms were swung to damage the armors of the Skeleton Warriors. The sound it made was goosebump inducing yet sharp.

These two groups were tirelessly carrying out the battle, and the sound that was being emitted was so rhythmic that it sounded like a music ensemble.

Moreover, these beings looked as if they would be able to carry out this diverse performance until the end of time.

The broken body of the Orcs were surprisingly being healed by the blizzard. Even a deep wound was mended when snow covered



it.

It was the same for the Skeleton Warriors, but it was the responsibility of another being to mend their wounds. It was the responsibility of the owner.

‘Busy. I’m so busy.’

Hyrkan was the owner of the Skeleton Warriors, and he never retreated on the battlefield. In a battle between the Undeads, he was doing something funny.

When a Cursed Orc’s body received a critical blow, it tried to repair its crumbled body. Hyrkan searched through the pile. He was like a cat searching through a trash bin. Instead of using his sword, he could be seen holding a bottle, and he was spraying holy water on the item he had found. This wasn’t a look of a veteran hero that fought in front of the fearless Skeleton Warriors should be showing.

[The Cursed Orc’s Curse is dispelled.]

However, at that moment, Hyrkan wasn’t lamenting or smiling in self-deprecation. He was actually struck by admiration.

‘I’ve been feeling this for awhile now, but... The Stormhunters must had shit blood when they first hunted here.



Twenty days.

It had been 20 days since Hyrkan had entered the Frozen Kingdom's territory after passing the frozen land.

This wasn't a short amount of time. During this period, he faced monsters that were dead, but they were still moving in their frozen state.

Of course, these monsters didn't possess only the simple abilities that came with a frozen monster.

'The difficulty of this game is really fucked up.'

The basic setup was that the monsters had been cursed by the Frost Dragon.

They couldn't die on their own, and even deep wounds would regenerate within a snowstorm. This terrifying curse wouldn't disappear since the weather wouldn't change here. These monsters were cursed as they suffered an endlessly pathetic fate.

Of course, from the User's point of view, the frozen body significantly increased the monster's defense. Moreover, they held properties of an Undead, which was even harder to kill. Even if one made a critical wound, the endless snowstorm would heal the wound in short order....



This was a commonly spoken phrase among Users.

‘The Users weren’t meant to catch these monsters. Instead, these monsters made the Users hunt down the game planner that came up with this monster design.’

Of course, this begs the question.

What method allowed Hyrkan to use these ridiculous monsters as his hunting fodder as he leveled up? Moreover, he hadn’t done this for just one or two days. He had spent 20 days fighting here, so how was he able to make these monsters his prey?

‘I’m really curious. How the hell did the Stormhunters catch these guys without the holy water?’

In the end, it was all thanks to the Stormhunters.

He had learned from the Stormhunters on how to deal with the monsters cursed by the Frost Dragons. The monsters had an emblem that was the source of their curse. If one sprayed holy water on top of this emblem, the curse was dispelled. The Stormhunters guild had found this out by clashing against these monsters.

[Your level has increased.]



Hyrkan had heard this Announcement for his 198th and 199th level up. It was all thanks to the Stormhunters.

‘Ok.’

When he heard the Announcement he had been anticipating, Hyrkan clenched his fist.

‘Oppa’s magic is replenished! All of you get ready to die!’

Hwah-roo-roo!

From between Hyrkan’s clenched fists, flame erupted outwards. When Hyrkan unclenched his fist, the flame shot up into the sky.

The burst of flame opened its mouth wide, and it started to take shape.

[The Orcs have been cursed by the Fire Golem’s Heat. Their Defense will lessen.]

Hwal hwal!

This giant made from flame possessed powerful fire that made the snow into steam in an instant.



The Fire Golem's presence was on a different level as it appeared. The Fire Golem was letting out heat, and the it was making the frozen body of the Orcs melt steadily.

Of course, at the same time, Hyrkan's magical energy was also being consumed rapidly akin to the snow melting.

'I can't waste any more consumable Items from this point on. I have to pull out after taking them out all at once!'

At that moment, Hyrkan decided to end the battle as soon as possible.

Ddahk ddahk!

His will was conveyed into his finger as he flicked it twice. It basically ordered the Skeleton Warriors to become more aggressive in their attacks.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, dul-goo-ruhk!

The Skeleton Warriors reacted to their owner's order. They aggressively drove into the Cursed Orcs.

Kwah-jeek!

To be precise, the melting of the ice would lower the defense, but it would also decrease the physical abilities of the Cursed Orcs. The



Skeleton Warriors were starting to overwhelm the Cursed Orcs.

It looked very funny, but Hyrkan once again started his important task.

Choo-roong choo-roong!

Instead of carrying his weeping Crying Sword, he held a bottle of holy water. He search for the Orc's Curse Emblem, and he splashed it with holy water.

One, two.... Hyrkan kept up with his ridiculous task, and when he reached 50, the Orcs numbered in the single digits.

Of course, Hyrkan continued on with this ridiculous form of battle, but it seemed he wouldn't be able to end all the Cursed Orcs once and for all.

‘Ah!’

An abrupt end came to his ridiculous looking work. The bottle with the holy water was empty.

However, there were still seven Cursed Orcs left!

The apparent state of his holy water should have left him flustered.



However, he had a determined expression instead of being flustered. He firmly closed his mouth.

‘I’ve reached that point.’

He had run out of the holy water. It was a signal.

‘I can’t believe I’ve made it this far.’

This was a signal that signified the final showdown. He had to put everything he had done to this point behind him.

It was as if it had read Hyrkan’s mind.

Suddenly, a powerful coldness swept across the ruins of the nameless castle.

Zzuh-juh-juhng!

When the coldness swept over him, frost grew on top of his armor like new buds. It was an unfathomable coldness.

[The Frost Knight is raging.]

[The Cursed Beings will awakened by the Frost Knight’s rage.]



‘Frost Knight.’

In front of the coldness, Hyrkan started reminiscing for a brief moment.

‘This bastard..... This was that bitch’s ultimate accomplishment.’

For a brief time, Storm Queen Shir had been the strongest User in Warlord... This was the video that had made her almost synonymous with Warlord.

Hyrkan had hated her very much, but that particular video allowed him to acknowledge her skill, talent, competence and iron will.

Hyrkan reminisced on that video.



## Chapter 146 – Frost Knight (2)

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3.

Before Hyrkan returned to the past, he spent the most important period of his life in Warlord. This was why he could clearly remember the past events so clearly right now.

The first Main Scenario Quest was the Corrupt Count episode. There had been a lot of confusion during this period of time. Many people experienced something new, and these batch of Users brought a new age of Warlord. At this stage, they were getting interested in the game, and they started paying more attention to this game.

Everything was still fresh, and everything was unfamiliar.

The second Main Scenario Quest was something given to those, who finished adjusting to the game the fastest. The Immoral Prince episode was where everything started in earnest. It was an era where Users enjoyed what had unfolded in front of them. It was also the era where people didn't hold back their money in the pursuit of enjoying this game. It was also an era where it was proven that incredible amount of fame, reputation and money could be earned by simply being good at the game of Warlord.

The third Main Scenario Quest wasn't about enjoying oneself by playing the Ruined Kingdom episode. It was the start of an era where the Users were in search for something. They started anticipating and craving for something. Every masterpiece had a



beginning and an end. The Users that started out from the launch of Warlord was starting to become interested in the end.

The end was the essence of Warlord. The world had been turned into a battle field, and someone would rise above to end the war.

Who was closest to being the ‘warlord’?

This was a conversation that would be ongoing until the Warlord came to an end. The person to light this argument on fire was none other than the Storm Queen Shir. It was her.

Frost Knight.

The Frost Dragon had put a curse on this ancient kingdom, and there was a monster that was enforcing this curse. This monster was continuously summoning its Cursed underlings, and it used a powerful magic to freeze any enemies that dared to go against it. Even if anyone was able to pierce through all the obstacles laid out in front of it, the monster could summon the Ice Wall of Lament. It also let out a ferocious cold air in its death throes as revenge. The Storm Queen had shown everyone the possibility through all of this.

It was possible to solo against a Boss Monster!

Groups of experts of this game had flocked to monsters that had overwhelming strength and ability. It was how everyone used to prove their bravery. However, after her battle against the Frost



Knight, soloing a monster with overwhelming strength and ability was the new method used by the Users to prove one's bravery and skill.

It was also at this point when he had developed a crush for her.

Ah! She had such a beautiful appearance.

She had a flashy look, and her background was unfathomable. However, these were all outstripped by her skills.

She had revealed a new possibility!

Moreover, at the time, Hyrkan was able to hold out using the help that been extended to him by her. The Hahoe Mask guild was slowly settling in, but once one paid off the monthly fee to play Warlord, one didn't have much money to spend on food. He had to live an impoverished life. It wouldn't have been strange if the Hahoe Mask guild transitioned into a guild that no longer existed. His dream and driving force was the only thing that had kept that guild going.

Of course, this version of the world no longer existed. Hyrkan was the only one in this world, who remembered this line of history. In a couple years, even he would start to forget about it.

‘Just admit it.’

However, he can say for certain that he could still remember all



of it right now.

‘In truth, this is a table set up by the Stormhunters. If I can’t eat everything on this table, I’m the retarded one.’

This was why Hyrkan had to monopolize the Frozen Kingdom.

This wasn’t him simply expressing his resolve.

The Stormhunters guild had revealed a comprehensive guide on hunting in the Frozen Kingdom. Even a mediocre guild could clear the Frozen Kingdom with the information they had released. Currently, Hyrkan was using a secret space found by the Stormhunters. It allowed him to avoid the absolute surveillance of the Frost Knight residing at the throne of the Frozen Kingdom.

Everything had been provided by the Stormhunters guild. In such circumstances, if he failed in achieving what he wanted to do, he wouldn’t just be regretful. He would be thoroughly embarrassed by the situation.

‘If I can’t monopolize this by myself, I deserve to quit this game.’

He would be so ashamed that he wouldn’t be able to play this game with a bare face. There was no way others would find out about this failure, but this was about Hyrkan’s own pride. He wouldn’t accept failure.

This was why Hyrkan was more serious than ever about this



venture. He was more serious about it then the time he fought the Immoral Prince. In truth, he hadn't fought the Immoral Prince after a thorough preparation. Hyrkan had been conflicted as he saw the battle between Storm Queen and the Immoral Prince. After a deliberating over his decision, he decided to act.

Unlike what he did in the Immoral Prince battle, he had made exhaustive preparations before he crossed the Terube castle wall. This was the result of the meticulous calculation.

‘The consumable Items I have left.... I have the exact amount left. I have just enough to catch the Frost Knight.’

Of course, his recent hunt wasn't actually about leveling up. He was meticulous in his actions as he set up the battle with the Frost Kingdom's boss monster, the Frost Knight. He hunted until he had the requisite amount of consumable left.

‘I hit level 199. That was unexpected.’

At this point in time, he had predicted he would be around 197 or 198. His prediction was off....

‘Well, that's a good thing.’

It was a pleasant miscalculation.

‘As expected, the most important part is the Ifrit's Essence.’



What consumable Items did Hyrkan prepare to take down the Frost Knight?

There was the Essence made by gathering the Ifrit's tears. Then there was the holy water made from the Great Priest's sacred blood, the gum made from the innards of the Glutton Alligator, and the healing clay made from the heart of a Red Troll.

These were all very expensive Items. Even the 30 great guilds used Items of such high value on the really important Raids.

Amongst these Items, the most important one was the Ifrit's Essence!

One had to catch a rare monster called Ifrit's Acolyte to obtain this Item. One had to gather Ifrit's tears then one had to pay a high production cost to create this Item. This item had two effects.

Fire Attribute Resistance will increase. Any penalty received from Fire type attacks will decrease.

Ice Attribute Resistance will increase. Any penalty received from Ice type attacks will decrease.

Ifrit was the Spirit King of Fire. With the help of Ifrit's powerful strength, one can become a friend of the fire, and at the same time, one gained the power to resist against the cold.



Originally, this consumable Item was used on Boss Monsters, who had powerful Fire type attacks. It was a one time use Item, and there was a time when it easily cost over 4 thousand gold to purchase it.

In recent days, the regions where the Ifrit's Acolyte appeared had increased. As the monster wasn't as rare any more, the market price had significantly gone down. Still, it was expensive. Hyrkan had bought a whopping 20 Ifrit's Essence to use in the Frozen Kingdom. He had only one left in his supply.

Basically, he'll have only one chance to challenge the Frost Knight.

In truth, there would be no re-attempt at this.

If Hyrkan failed at the Frost Knight Raid, he would suffer a Game Over. The place he'll be revived was the Terube castle wall. Currently, there were numerous Users massing up at the Terube castle wall for the Northland hunt. Moreover, there probably was a good number of Users, who had already met the requirement for the Northland Exploration quest. These users were already in the Northland. If they were skilled and fast, these Users probably had already entered into the territory of the Frozen Kingdom.

In such a situation, Hykran would be spending his 48 hours in death. To fight the Frost Knight again, he would have to cover a significant amount of distance to get from the Terube castle wall to the Frozen Kingdom. When he got here again, he would have to take a number. He would have to wait in a queue.



Moreover, the wait time would be significant. He could probably climb the Urugual mountain range once in the time he would have to wait in the queue.

He shouldn't go into this expecting a second try.

'Cast Iron Rhinoceros Gem and...the Bone Explosives. All of these Items are worth over 100 golds each.'

This was why he had prepared the most expensive Items.

He had spent an incredible amount. If he failed this Raid, the entire time he had in the Frost Kingdom would register as a loss in his budget.

After checking the number of Items he had, Hyrkan felt a resoluteness.

He carefully started placing his organized Items into his pockets and pouches. He felt tense as he carried out this action.

The Items couldn't just be stored anywhere. He had to know where these Items were located at, and he had put place it in locations where he could quickly reach it in a desperate situation. He had to be thorough in his calculations.

The last Item he picked up was the most important consumable



Item. it was the Ifrit's Essence.

It was large enough that it was a little bit uncomfortable to put it in one's mouth. Hyrkan carefully picked it up, and he looked inside the Item.

‘This is worth more than a month supply of food. It is expensive yet it tastes nasty.’

At that moment....

“Uh?”

Hyrkan unintentionally lost his grip on the Ifrit's Essence. His fingers were slippery from the frost.

Took took!

The fallen Ifrit's Essence bounced several times before it quickly rolled towards a wall.

‘Uh!’

At that moment, Hyrkan became frightened. He looked towards the wall where the Ifrit's Essence was rolling towards to. There was a big crack at the bottom of the wall. He didn't have the luxury to express his surprise. When Hyrkan approached the wall, the Ifrit's Essence fell into the crack. It was like a hole-in-one in golf. It



had been that accurate.

Hyrkan didn't ruminate over the surprise he was feeling. He didn't waste any time.

Choo-oong!

'If I don't have this, I can't beat it. I'll have to just return to the Terube castle. Please!'

He immediately took out the sword sheathed at his waist. He started to scratch at the crack with his sword.

Choo-roong, choo-roong!

The Crying Sword was a famed sword that had taken down numerous monsters and Users. Currently, it was considered to be one of the ultimate swords amongst the sword carrying Users. It was on par with the Dethroned King's sword. In a flash, the Crying Sword had been turned into a pickaxe.

Maybe it was because of this fact. The Crying Sword could be heard making especially mournful wails.

This sword could make scrap metals of high durability armors, and it could cut through monsters with very high defense. However, it couldn't make a scratch in this very plain stonework. It was a surprise to him.



This was when Hyrkan's accident started to roll forward again.

‘What the hell?’

[This region cannot be destroyed.]

The System Announcement answered Hyrkan's question.

‘Uh?’

Hrykan's mishap came to pause. Hyrkan stopped to look up at the plain looking wall. The harsh coldness had caused ice to form over the wall. He looked at the ice wall. Then he looked at the crack that had eaten his precious Item.

Finally, Hyrkan felt that something was off.

‘Why is the crack only here?’

Hyrkan was at a location about ten square meters in size. This alcove reminded him of a cube. The path to enter this location was small. It was a location where the Cursed Monsters under the command of the Frost Knight couldn't come in. This was the space used by the Storm Hunters guild to safely rest before they had battled the Frost Knight. None other than the Storm Queen herself



had explained the use of this location, and how important it was to rest here.

Of course, every time Hyrkan had to take a break from the battle he had used this location.

There had been such a crack here?

If one considered the setting of this stage, even if a User had made a crack, the crack should have been mended over by ice. Moreover, the stage becomes reset when a day passes.

This basically meant that his crack was clearly intentional. It meant that this crack had been placed here by design.

Hyrkan got up from his seat.

Choo-roong, choo-roong!

The Crying Sword, which had been used by its owner as a pickaxe, started to grumble. This time Hyrkan used the Crying Sword as a tool to peel off the ice from the wall.

Suh-guhk suh-guhk!

The sound of the thick ice falling drowned out the Crying Sword's wailing.



In the end, the wall revealed the Frozen Kingdom's emblem. A sun and moon was above a large tree.

Hyrkan put on a smile.

‘Yes. Luck is once again with me.’

Hyrkan had found something the Stormhunters had never discovered.

4.

There had been a kingdom in the Northland that had reached the era of prosperity a long time ago. They were closest to the sun and the moon, and various races lived as one in this kingdom. They were the keepers of peace in the world.

On a fateful day, a Frost Dragon suddenly appeared, and it crushed the kingdom that was in its era of prosperity. Then it placed a curse on the kingdom.

It was curse where one could never die, and the weather would never change. It was a curse where one had to forever fight the people that the kingdom had once helped!

The Frost Dragon even bestowed authority to a knight, so it could keep an eye on the curse. The Frost Dragon appointed the knight as the owner of the capital, which was a mere shell of itself.



This was the story behind the Frozen Kingdom, and it was also a clue about the Ruined Kingdom.

“Finally, I receive the reward for long resisting the evil curse of the Frost Dragon.”

Hyrkan had found a hidden tunnel, and when he followed the tunnel, he reached a location where a being had chained himself a long time ago. This being was so weathered that its body was falling apart. The NPC Nero showed infinite sadness at not being able to die. However, Hyrkan couldn't feel any hatred or confusion from the NPC.

“My name is Nero. I am the last heir to the kingdom that exists only in a nightmare now.”

Hyrkan decided to be bold. He introduced himself.

“My name is Hyrkan. I am nothing special. The world is overflowing with calamity, and I'm an adventurer that is striving towards hope.”

‘I hope the cameras are doing a good job.’

Hyrkan had been smart in how he approached this. He started recording beforehand.



Wasn't this a truth that even the Stormhunters weren't able to find out?

'Yes. I always felt a bit disappointed at the Stormhunter's videos. This is what they missed!'

Hyrkan was happy. He had to force himself not to laugh. It was almost painful.

Of course, he wasn't happy about the fact that he found a truth that the Stormhunters hadn't found. This footage would be part of a pay-per-view full length film, which was currently being made by him. This would be one more point in the story that would be added to the film about the Frozen Kingdom quest. He felt happy about the sweet reward he would receive from it.

"Is that so? That makes me happy. I'm happy that a hero like you still exists in this world."

"I'm not a hero. Anyways, I cannot fathom how you came to be in this state.... I will undo your chains."

"Please don't. These chains allows me to hold onto my intellect. If you unchain me, I'll be just like the poor souls wandering outside.."

".....what happened here?"

Nero started to tell his story after being questioned. Hyrkan



didn't ask any more questions. He just calmly listened to the story.

The story wasn't that much different from the one known by Hyrkan.

The Frost Dragon had put a curse on the prosperous kingdom, and it caused the kingdom to freeze. After everything was frozen, things had pretty much stayed the same until now.

When the story ended, Nero naturally gave Hyrkan a mission.

“You are the only one I can ask this of. I know better than anyone that the Ruined Kingdom cannot be brought back. I just want revenge. If revenge isn't possible, at the very least, free the tormented people from under the Frost Dragon's knight.”

[The Quest 'Kingdom's Revenge' has started.]

[The Quest 'Evidence to the Ruined Kingdom'.]

[You've gained the Title Agent of Revenge'.]

[You've gained the Title 'One who Earned the Evidence of the Ruined Kingdom'.]

Hyrkan was barely able to stop himself from laughing at the System Announcement. He fixed a serious expression on his face, and he nodded his head. He had his mask on, but Hyrkan wasn't even conscious of this fact. This was how happy he was.



“Yes.”

At that moment...

[The curtain to the new era has risen.]

[The one to open this new era is ‘Hyrkan’.]

The System Announcement was heard in Hyrkan’s ears, and it was heard by everyone currently enjoying the game of Warlord.

‘Uh?’

Once again Hyrkan’s mishap came to a standstill.



# Chapter 147 – Frost Knight (3)

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5.

The Main Scenario Quest was the most important main content in Warlord. This was why there was a clear demarcation on when it starts and ends.

This was why the updates regarding the Main Scenario quest had been put on the System-wide Announcement. It updated the Users of the start and end to the Main Scenario Quest.

It had notified everyone of the start and end of the Corrupt Count episode.

Then it notified everyone of the start and end to the Immoral Prince episode.

At that moment, the 5th such Announcement had been sent out, and it shook the foundation of Warlord.

Of course, any news regarding Warlord shook the online world.

– The third Main Scenario Quest has just started!

– Finally, it begins!

– Is the 2nd Advancement going to be released?



– Something seems a bit off this time.

This Main Scenario Quest was different from the ones before. The game had been clear in spreading the name of the User that had opened up this new era.

– So who the hell is Hyrkan? Which 30 great guild is he in?

His name was Hyrkan.

– ㄴ You dolt! That's the Hahoe Mask's character name!

– ㄴ Uh? The Hahoe Mask was named Hyrkan?

– ㄴ The Hahoe Mask's name isn't the Hahoe Mask?

– ㄴ Wasn't it Huh-Maeung?

The User called the Hahoe Mask was known more by the nickname he had created than his actual character name.

6.

It was a small tunnel that a person could barely pass through. He had left behind Nero as he headed towards the decisive battle. As he was passing through the tunnel, Hyrkan became flustered for a



moment.

‘My god.’

He had become the main character that heralded the start of the Ruined Kingdom episode. Of course, it was something he had always wanted.

However, this should have occurred at the peak of the Urugal mountain. It shouldn't have happened right now. It should have happened when he caught the fire breathing Slime Dragon.

‘.....the Frozen Kingdom and the Urugal mountain range. The key was placed in two locations?’

It wasn't as if he didn't understand the concept behind it.

Originally, Warlord's Main Scenario Quest had many roads that led to a single destination. The event that triggered the Ruined Kingdom episode in the Urugal mountain range may have just been one of several methods one could have used. The probability that there were multiple trigger points rather than one was high.

It just meant that the Stormhunters hadn't been able to find the clue located in the Frozen Kingdom. In the meanwhile, someone else had succeeded in climbing the Urugal mountain range.

‘Shit. Did I perhaps change the content of the Main Scenario quest? It seems a lot of Quest independent of the Ruined Kingdom



episode was released too.'

This hadn't been a ploy hatched by someone else. Hyrkan's own hands had changed the events, and he couldn't blame anyone for what happened from now on.

'This is driving me nuts.'

The Ruined Kingdom was Hyrkan's last chance. After the Ruined Kingdom episode, the Dragon's Army episode would start. He didn't have much knowledge about what would happen there. When the Dragon's Army episode was starting to get interesting, a grudge formed between the Hahoe Mask guild and the Stormhunters guild. No, it wasn't a grudge between the guilds. Only Hyrkan had been excised and thrown away. Then he was crushed without mercy.

Hyrkan shut his mouth tight.

'I'm guessing the larger framework won't change.....'

For the first time, he checked the exact content of the Quest given to him by Nero.

The Quest Window formed inside the dark space.

[Kingdom's Revenge]



- Quest Rank : Epic
- Quest level Range : Over 195
- Quest Content : To save the the beings suffering under the Frost Dragon’s curse, defeat the Frost Knight.
- Quest Reward : Ancient Power ‘Frost’

At that moment, Hyrkan’s mishap came to a pause. He stopped walking. Until now, this was the most forceful stop he had taken.

Hyrkan stood there for over one minute.

“Frost?”

As he stood still, a short word came out of Hyrkan’s mouth.

Eventually, he repeated the short word.

“Frost!”

Since he started Warlord, Hyrkan uttered the strongest exclamation he had ever spoken.

7.

Ancient Power.



It was the core content that permeated the Ruined Kingdom episode. It was judged to be the greatest content in the Ruined Kingdom episode. It was the crux of the Skill Enhancement System.

Through the Ruined Kingdom episode, the Users would be able to find relics of the Ruined Kingdom, which was crumbling away... One could find traces of castles, dungeons and the hidden mysteries. One would be able to gain the Ancient Power through various quests.

Moreover, there were different ranks to the Ancient Power one could obtain.

There was the Transcendent Rank that would allow one to strengthen the rank of a Skill.

There was the Legend Rank, which added a special ability to the Skill.

Then there was the Mythos Rank where a Class ability was added.

Amongst these three, the Transcendent Rank was the least difficult to obtain. It was something the light Users would be able to gain.

The Legend Rank would need a good amount of work to obtain for the light Users, but if one was dedicated, it could be earned.



However, the Mytho Rank was impossible to get through will and determination. Basically, it wasn't a content for the light Users. This was a content for those that consumed the game too fast... From the game's perspective, it was for the Users that disgusted the game developers.

It was a basically a content that said, 'Let's see if you bastards can beat this!'

The problem wasn't that it was simply difficult. It was complex. One had to discover various Quests, and one had to complete it all. One had to travel to various location in this vast world of Warlord, and one had to gather Ingredients that could only be obtained by the User.

Moreover, no one had attempted it yet, so Hyrkan would be a pioneer. As expected of someone, who had opened up this new era, he would be achieving these accomplishments first!

This was the reason why he was doing all of this.

Hyrkan didn't have to worry about coexisting with anyone else in the Ruined Kingdom Episode. He didn't even keep the idea of coexistence inside his mind. This was the reason why he had insisted on a monopoly.

If he went through the standard procedure, he would have to give up leveling up for two to three months to earn the Mythos Rank power. He would have to focus solely on the quests.



However, the Ruined Kingdom episode of the Main Scenario Quest gave the Mythos Rank Ancient Power through the Quest Reward. Of course, there was a caveat that it was only a reward if he was able to get the Quest Reward before all the other Users in Warlord.

Moreover, Hyrkan knew of 5 types of Mythos Rank Ancient Power.

Frost, Flame, Thunder, Darkness and Radiance.

When Hyrkan developed a profound interest for the game, this was the extent of information that had been made available to him. At the time, there were only two hundred Users that possessed all 5 Mythos Ranked Ancient Power. It wasn't a lot of people. It was one year after the Ruined Kingdom and the Skill Enhancement system had been released, yet only two hundred Users had gained the power in a population of millions. Moreover, only two hundred people had it amongst the people, who had dedicated their lives to this game.

Of course, Hyrkan hadn't been one of them. He couldn't even dream about obtaining it.

However, Hyrkan had the chance to obtain one of this Ancient Power right now.

'This is weird. The Ancient Power reward for climbing to the top of the Urugal mountain was a Legendary Rank.'



It was his chance to to obtain the Ancient Power of Frost.

It was a surprising opportunity, but on the other hand, he felt a very deep apprehension towards it.

‘So why would the Mythos Rank suddenly show up here....’

However, his apprehension didn’t last long.

‘Frost.....’

“.....WOW.”

He had thought about obtaining the Mytho Rank Ancient Power. However, he never would have expected to obtain it this way.

This was why Hyrkan wasn’t afraid of the change. This wasn’t the time to be afraid of the change.

‘I have to seize it.’

Hyrkan estimated how much time had passed.

He had expended more time than expected, because of Nero. However, he didn’t need to take a break by logging out. On the contrary, this was the perfect time to do this.



‘No matter what.’

At that moment, it was like the time he had faced the Immoral Prince and Argardo.... No, he found a purpose that exceeded the one he had from before. He had found a purpose that was worth putting everything on the line on this battle.

‘I have to catch it no matter what..’

Hyrkan started running after he exited the secret tunnel leading to Nero.

“Ooh-ha-ha-ha!”

He headed towards the Frozen Throne where the Frost Knight ruled from!

8.

It was as if the throne had been carved out of an enormous ice. There was a knight wearing a massive armor that was made out of semi-transparent ice. It filled up the massive throne. Each decoration on its armor looked to have be sculpted by hand, and it was an extraordinary sight. It held the pattern of dragon scales, and it looked as if it was about to come alive. The helmet was reminiscent of a Dragon’s horn, and one could see a pale and frozen face beneath the helmet. It was an ogre with frightening looking teeth.



Frost Knight.

It was in charge of maintaining the Frost Dragon's curse. Its enemy had arrived right in front of it, yet it didn't even bother getting up from the throne.

“This place had been judged by the being that is great yet harsh.”

It sounded ancient and grave.

“How are you dirty this place.”

It started to move slowly.

“This place had committed disrespect.....”

It spoke slowly as it clearly enunciated each word.

“It will repay the transgression through eternal servitude.”

As if it had said all it had to say, the Frost Knight slowly got up from its seat. The process of it standing up wasn't easy, simple, or brief.

Zzuh-juh-juhk!

The Frost Knight's body had become one with the frozen throne.



As it stood up, one could hear the sound of ice shattering. One could even see cracks form on the throne. How long had it sat there frozen to the throne? It made one wonder if the Frost Knight had never gotten up even once after taking seat.

‘The bastard talks too much.’

At that moment, Hyrkan faced the Frost Knight. At that moment he had to defeat it, so the small details didn’t register in his eyes.

In the first place, Hyrkan didn’t hold the Frost Knight in any reverence. He had entered the newly liberated region ruled by the Frost Knight with a do or die attitude.

“I want those laughable cursed beings to wake up.”

Hyrkan said those determined words inside his head. He was more coldly focused than any other battle he had conducted before.

He was at a point where he desperately needed to change. However, he couldn’t half-ass it through fear. It would only be to his detriment if he worried over it. Thanks to the Stormhunters guild he had learned that shaking from fear would only harm himself.

Hyrkan’s gaze looked around his surrounding, and at the same time, he bit down on the Ifrit’s Essence inside his mouth.

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[Ifrit's power is seeping into your entire body.]

At that moment, the snow from the blizzard that had touched Hyrkan's body fell to the floor as water droplets.

At the same time, Hyrkan opened both his arms wide as he scattered what he had been holding in his hands. The Skeleton Fragments let out a dull sound as they hit the floor.

Ooh ooh ooh.....

The Cursed Monsters were summoned by the Frost Knight. They let out a low and anguished sound as they got into formation.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, ddul-goo-ruhk!

The Skeleton Warriors summoned by Hyrkan took form, and they opened their mouths wide as they let out a silent scream towards their enemies.

Ddahk ddahk!

The declaration of war was done through Hyrkan's hand.

The Skeleton Warriors wearing a variety of armors started charging towards the enemies.



Hwah-roo-roo!

During all of this, the Skeleton Magicians had already formed hefty fireballs, and they threw it towards the enemies.

The fireballs were sent flying towards the group of Cursed Monsters.

Zzuh-juhk!

At that moment, an Ice Wall rose up from the ground to block the fireballs. Fire impacted on ice.

Kwah-gwahng!

Accompanying a loud sound, the fire and ice fell as it scattered across the ground.

Rain of Fire. Hail of Ice.

Kahng!

The Skeleton Warriors and the Cursed Monsters fought within this shower.

It was 30 against a hundred. If one was basing it just on numbers,



the Skeleton Warriors were at a disadvantage.

Shweek, shweek!

However, the Skeleton Warriors swiftly evaded the attacks of the Cursed Monsters. The advantage from the fact that there were a 100 of Cursed Monsters became nullified.

The Skeleton Warriors had fought the Cursed Monsters for 20 days under Hyrkan's command. There was no way the Skeleton Warriors would lose against the Cursed Monsters.

He had trained them for this purpose.

‘I invested 20 days for this day.’

He hadn't been lax in his actions. He hadn't just been hunting to level up. He had trained the Skeleton Warriors up to a point where they could easily defeat the Cursed Monsters. In his training, he purposefully made it so that his Skeleton Warriors would have to fight a Cursed Monster in a one-on-one matchup. He later increased it to a 3 vs one fight. He purposefully allowed the Skeleton Warriors fight at a numerical disadvantage.

This was the solution to the first problem.

‘I blocked the slaves it had cursed..’



If he wanted to catch the Frost Knight, there were four obstacles he would have to overcome. This was the solution to the first problem.

‘So the only thing left is.... I have to overcome the Frost Fog, Wall of Agony and the Frost Dragon’s Curse.’

Since he gave a solution to one of the problems, he had to come up with three more.

He had the three solutions, and he was about to put those answers into motion.

“Pooh-haha!”

He felt joy from just imagining it. It was absurd, but he spontaneously let out a laugh. He didn’t have to enjoy it through his imagination any more. He could enjoy it in reality.

“What shall we do?”

Half way up the Urugal mountain range.

Thirty Users were within a cave that had been placed midway up the mountain. Their expressions were stiff as they waited for something.

“What do you think we should do? We have to catch it!”



“You should it still for a moment.”

“What? What did you just say to me, you traitorous bastard?”

“How long are you... Whatever. Yes. I’m the traitor, so I’ll keep my mouth shut. Of course. I’m the traitor, and I did something very wrong. How dare I open my mouth? I’ll keep my impertinent mouth shut.”

They were the elite members of the Stormhunters.

They had attempted to fight the owner of the Urugal mountain’s peak, and they had failed. After experiencing failure, some in the guild mustered up their courage, and they had come up here for another attempt.

However, at that moment, their leader Shir wasn’t giving them an answer as to whether they would be attempting the Raid again.

“Are you trying to pick a fight with me?”

“Oop oop! Oop oop! Oop opp oop!”

It was Hatch and Hahui. Shir kept her mouth shut as these two acted out noisily in front of her.

In the end, Shir’s silence bled into Hatch and Hahui. The heavy



atmosphere descended on the group, and it started pressing down on their will to even attempt this Raid again. It seemed they wouldn't be able to look at the Urugal mountain range for a while. They felt the atmosphere press down on their shoulders and neck.

It happened at that moment.

[The curtain to the new era has risen.]

[The one to open this new era is 'Hyrkan'.]

The surprising news overtook them.

“What the hell?”

“A System-wide Announcement?”

The silence had been heavy, and it had been hard to break. However, the silence was smashed to pieces like a sheet of glass made of sugar.

“Who the hell is that?”

“Hyrkan? Who is that?”

At that moment, another silence that couldn't be compared to the one from before started to spread.



“Hyrkan..... My god. Isn't that the Hahoe Mask's character name?”

Accompanying the silence, everyone looked towards a single User.

Storm Queen Shir.

Currently, she was one of the few that could be compared to the Hahoe Mask in terms of skill.

On the other hand, Shir's gaze was focused on the one that had spoken.

“P...please speak.”

“Are you sure the Hahoe Mask's character name is Hyrkan?”

“.....ah, yes. It wasn't as if he tried to hide it. If you look at the Hahoe Mask's early videos, he named himself as Hyrkan.”

“Let's go.”

“What?”

Hatch queried at the sudden answer given by Shir. As if the rest



of the group agreed with Hatch's sentiment, they tilted their head in confusion. One could almost see a question mark form on top of their heads.

"I still want to recruit the Hahoe Mask, but I don't want to hear that we are inferior to the Hahoe Mask."

Shir spoke towards them in a low voice.

"I don't know about how I measure up to him, but I never thought that the Stormhunters guild was weaker than the Hahoe Mask."

The expression on everyone's face changed at her words. They swallowed the silence that had descended on them, and they started to manufacture courage within themselves.

"Let's try it one more time."

"There is no reason why we can't kill it."

"There is no reason why we should allow ourselves to left behind by the Hahoe Mask."

At their words, Shir made a beautiful smile that was beyond description.

The Stormhunters once again decided to attempt climbing the



summit of the Urugal mountain.



# Chapter 148 – Ancient Power (1)

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1.

Hyrkan was holding onto a bone that was the size of a pencil. It started to expand to fill his hand. He shook his wrist as he held onto the thickened bone, and the bone immediately enlarged into a large spear.

“Hoo-oo!”

After taking a short breath, Hyrkan got into his stance.

Javelin Throw.

He was aiming for an enemy that was very far away, so this was harder than it looked.

‘Hoo-oo!’

The distance wasn’t a problem. The problem was the fine control that was needed to do it. Moreover, there were external factors that interfered with his concentration.

There was a fierce battle going on in front of Hyrkan’s eyes. At times, the battle came right up to his nose.

The Cursed slaves controlled by the Frost Knight was trying to



break through the Skeleton Warriors to get to him. The Skeleton Warriors were trying to protect its master. The Skeleton Warriors got in the way as they fought the enemies that was trying to make a path towards Hyrkan.

Kah-ahng!

The rough sounds of steel clashing was an evidence of this fierce fight.

Kwah-jeek.

The sound of flesh, armor and bones being crushed didn't show any signs of dying down.

Koohng!

Whenever some large monster fell, a large sound was made, and it shook all the beings that had their feet on the battlefield.

Moreover, at times, some monsters got through the Skeleton Warriors. This was what had happened right now. A monster eventually had gotten past the efforts of the Skeleton Warriors. A monster with frozen arms was attacking Hyrkan. It had its arm, which was as sharp as a sword, up in the air as it approached Hyrkan.

As this was happening, Hyrkan had to aim and hit his target. It wasn't an easy task.



It shouldn't have been easy....

Shoong!

However, Hyrkan did it too easily. He did it effortlessly. The Cursed slave, which had bypassed the Skeleton Warriors, had almost reached him, yet Hyrkan had accomplished his task. He had true in his aim as he hurled the javelin.

Shweeeek!

The spear didn't fly in an arc. It traveled in a straight line.

At the same time as he threw his spear, he took a step forward as if he had intended to do it.

He shortened the distance with the Frozen Orc that was rushing him.

The gap had closed much quicker by him, and the Frozen Orc didn't hesitate to swing its arm towards Hyrkan's head. Hyrkan easily dodged the attack by lowering his head.

Puhk!

Then he lightly stuck out his foot to trip the Frozen Orc.



Koo-oohng!

The Frozen Orc fell forward, and it didn't even have the chance to turn its body around to look up at the sky.

Choo-roong!

The Crying Sword had severed its head with a single strike. The severed head rolled away.

Bbuh-uhng!

Hyrkan kicked the head as if he was playing soccer. Then he looked at the Skeleton Warriors with cold eyes.

Was this all the Skeleton Warriors could do?

This was the message he conveyed in his gaze. Of course, the look shouldn't have worked on the Skeleton Warriors, but one could see the Skeleton Warriors start to shift towards being more aggressive in their attack. Hyrkan tried to hold back a laughter when he saw this.

At that moment...

Koohng!



Until now, the Frost Knight had looked over the battlefield in a detached manner. No, he had looked down at it with a haughty attitude. Without unsheathing the enormous sword, the Frost Knight hit the ground with its sheathe.

Including the Bone Spear Hyrkan had just thrown, there were 7 total spears stuck in the Frost Knight's body.

It was embedded in its armor. It seemed the Frost Knight hadn't felt the need to move. It didn't pay an ounce of attention to them as the Bone Spears stuck in its body. It was treating the Bone Spears as if they were decorations for its armor.

The Frost Knight hit the ground ground again.

Koohng!

The sheathed sword hit the ground consecutively.

Boo-doo-doohk!

The Bone Spears stuck on its body froze, and it crumbled away.

Koohng!

The ground rang out for the third time. A crack formed on the sheath.



A crack shaped like a lightning formed on the sword sheathe, and the crack started to thicken.

Koohng!

The ground rang out for the fourth time, and it was the last time it rang out. One could see through the crack of the sheath, and a thick fog started seeping out.

The first to react to the fog was the Cursed slaves.

Boo-roo-roo!

They had been fighting, but they unconsciously started to shake. In such a tight battle, it was basically suicide to tremble like this!

The Skeleton Warriors didn't miss the opening created by the shaking enemies. The Skeleton Warriors didn't even need to think about their actions.

The only one that had to think was a single User.

'It's coming.'

Hyrkan clenched his fist as if he had expected this. Clear droplets of liquid fell through his clenched fist.



Clay Play!

However, it happened before Hyrkan could complete his summoning.

Poo-hwaht!

The Frost Knight's sheath broke into pieces, and the extreme cold that was sleeping within it for all these years exploded forth.

[The Frost Fog is spreading quickly.]

Hweeeeeee!

The Frost Fog was so powerful that a System Warning was given. The Frost Fog ate up the battlefield in an instant.

Everything was frozen as all stood still. All kinds of sounds had been emitted from the fierce battle a moment ago, but the fierce scene of battle was frozen in place.

The unfathomable silence replaced the fierceness of battle.

It was as if one's goose bumps had frozen by this sight.



The first one to disturb this scene was Hyrkan. Hyrkan had frozen in place with his fist clenched.

Boo-doohk!

He started thawing, and the ice started to crumble away.

When his fist appeared, it was like a domino effect. The ice around Hyrkan's body started to break away.

When the ice had all shattered away, Hyrkan opened his fist. A Phoenix appeared out of Hyrkan's hand.

To be precise, it was a level 170 Boss Monster called the Big Bird.

It had a massive body, yet the bird boasted even bigger wings. It had the power to send enemies flying with its terrifying wingbeats. It was the most difficult Boss Monster in the same rank category!

The Big Bird appeared with a body that was burning.

As soon as it appeared, it started flapping its wings. Accompanying its wingbeats, a wind of flame overtook the frozen battlefield. It melted the frozen time, and the battle started up again.

Hyrkan, who hadn't done anything up until now, started to run.



‘The 2nd Phase has started.’

This was the second problem posed by the Frost Knight. He pierced through the Frost Fog.

In the early runs in the past, numerous Users were unable to do anything against this attack. They suffered the attack with their eyes open. While the Users were frozen, they suffered blows from the Frost Knight’s sword. He had just broken through the calamity faced by those Users.

The solving of this problem was good news. However, at the same time, it meant he would be posed with a new problem from the Frost Knight.

‘I have to do this immediately.’

Finally, Hyrkan summoned the two Skeleton Knights for the first time in this battle. When the Skeleton Knights appeared, the tide of the battle changed 180 degrees.

[The Special Ability ‘Chivalry’ has activated.]

[The Special Ability ‘Commander’ has activated.]

The tide of the battle turned overwhelmingly in favor of the Skeleton Warriors when the Skeleton Knights appeared.



On top of it all, the appearance of Big Bird Fire Golem had decreased the defense of the Cursed slaves. Since the Skeleton Warriors had gotten stronger compared to a moment ago, the Cursed slaves were helpless.

Moreover, the Skeleton Knights started to attack in a frenzied manner.

One of the Skeleton Knights was equipped with the Great Battle Hero's Sword. This particular Skeleton Knight was the definition of being overpowered.

Puh-uhk!

When the sword came down on the hardened skin of the Cursed slave, it didn't let out a sharp sound. It let out a dull sound as the Cursed slave was broken into pieces.

Critical blow!

This was a more frightening sight than the enemies being sliced open.

The Skeleton Knights were making a path. When one Knight seemed to be slowing down, the Skeleton Knight with the Great Battle Hero's Sword took over to quickly clear the path. They were making a path towards the Frost Knight, and at the end of the road, the Frost Knight was standing there.



The Frost Knight was almost 4 meters tall. The Skeleton Knights were almost 3 meters tall. They stood facing each other.

At that moment, white bone started to encase the Skeleton Knight's body.

Bone Armor!

‘Just last 1 minute.’

Hyrkan activated more power, so the Skeleton Knights could face off against the enemy.

He summoned their horns. He didn't forget to activate the Madness Helm. The Skeleton Knights were encased in Bone Armor, and the tell-tale sign of the Madness Helm appeared as a horn on their skulls. The Skeleton Knights opened their mouths wide as they displayed their ferocious nature. They raised their swords at the same time to attack the Frost Knight.

Of course, the Frost Knight swung its sword to block the attacks.

It was a collision between swords.

Ggoo-roong!

It should have sounded like steel clashing, but it came out as loud



thunderclaps.

Each attack had a huge effect on the participants. It was as if there were springs attached to the swords. Every sword swung by either the Skeleton Knights or the Frost Knight was bounced backward after the impact.

This was why the battle was slow.

Ggwah-roong!

After a single clash, one had to resist using one's strength. Then one had to attack after resetting one's stance.

Ggwah-roong!

They once again attacked each other in terms of strength. Each strike made one take a deep breath twice.

This was how powerful these strikes were. They were exchanging blows that had all their strengths behind it. It was hair-raising to approach this melee!

‘Ok!’

It was a hair-raising display where one would be remiss to even stick one's hand in there. However, someone dared to push his body into the fray.



Hyrkan!

He had already moved behind the Frost Knight, and he sprung towards the Frost Knight's back.

Kwah-jeek!

Hyrkan's sword pierced the exact center of Frost Knight's back.

Choo-roo-roo!

At that moment, the Crying Sword let out a sad cry. It was as if it was lamenting that fact that it had met a crazy owner. It sounded as it was grumbling. However, Hyrkan ignored the grumbles as he worked against the Frost Knight's movements. He made a scar on the back plate of the Frost Knight's armor.

Then he immediately put a Bone Spear through the scar.

The Skeleton Knights and the Frost Knight had exchanged 7 strikes up to this point. The Frost Knight's sword had already crushed the Skeleton Knight's Bone Armor, and it had even dented the armor underneath it. After the 1 minute Hyrkan had wanted passed, the Frost Knight looked like a hedgehog.

The surprising part was the fact that the Frost Knight didn't pay any attention to Hyrkan during his work.



It was a loophole.

The Frost Knight didn't register any attacks on its armor unless it exceeded a certain threshold of damage. This was the loophole.

It had an innate arrogance and it was a near immortal. It died without knowing the pain of death, and this loophole was developed through these confluence of characteristics.

It was a loophole found through the sacrifice of over 10 Stormhunters guild members.

After finishing his attack using the loophole, he looked at his Skeleton Knights.

The Bone Armor hadn't held up. Moreover, the damage to the Skeleton Knight's defensive gears were quite significant.

However, the Skeleton Knights still showed the willingness to fight on. They showed Hyrkan that they could go on.

‘Thank you.’

The Skeleton Knights had performed well above expectation, so he thanked the bedraggled Skeleton Knights.

He put his thanks into motion. Hyrkan used the Bone Spears as



handholds, and he started performing a job only he could do.

This was a job that couldn't be done by the Skeleton Warriors, Skeleton Knights and the Golem. He started the Armor Breaking, which was a job that could only be done by Hyrkan.

Choo-roong!

This time the Crying Sword let out a cry of joy. The Crying Sword was the best at taking off enemy's tough scales, leather or carapace. It was something the sword enjoyed doing!

The Crying Sword started to dismantle the Frost Knight's armor in a short amount of time.

It was the result of giving a master calligrapher the best possible brush to use.

As its owner did its job, the Skeleton Knights continued to fight hard until the end. At the two minute mark, a Skeleton Knight had lost its left arm. When the battle reached the 3 minute mark, they were in terrible shape. The demise of the Skeleton Knights looked inevitable. In the end, the Skeleton Knights had lasted three times longer than Hyrkan had expected.

Of course, Hyrkan was also working well above expectation as if to reward the earlier efforts of the Skeleton Knights. The Frost Knight's anger started to flow out of the cracked armor.

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[The cold energy that can never be broken is flowing over you.]

[All Stats will be decreased.]

[You will suffer from terrifying frostbites.]

This freezing air pretty much repelled anyone close to the Frost Knight. Even the Ifrit's Essence wouldn't let one resist against this cold air.

Of course, one couldn't resist against the cold air using will power or stubbornness. If one unwisely choose to resist against it, the User would inevitably be frozen to death by the cold air!

Hyrkan had experienced this for the first time, but he was fully aware of the effect of this attack. Therefore, he put distance with the cold air. However, the Skeleton Knights froze over as they could evade it.

Hyrkan couldn't continue watching his noble Skeleton Knights.

Koo-oohng!

When Hyrkan distanced himself, the Frost Knight erected an enormous ice wall. This wall completely cut off the Frost Knight from the battlefield.

This was different from the ice walls he had seen several times



before. This wall looked to have been carved. There were shaped carved into the wall. It was as if various monsters, elves, dwarves and humans were trying to escape hell. This image was willing up the wall.

[The Wall of Agony has appeared.]

[The Frost Knight's power is recovering across the Wall of Agony.]

‘Third Phase.’

This was the third problem that was posed to him. It was the appearance of the Wall of Agony.

This wall boasted an incredible amount of defense. On top of it all, the wall had a special property that it didn't accumulate damage.

One had to break through it using a single blow.

As he looked at this door, Hyrkan took out a card he had prepared. He took out a single gem, and he gripped it.

Ddoohk ddoohk!

The gem that had melted in Hyrkan's hand dripped to the frozen



ground, and a Golem was awakened.

The Earth Golem appeared in the shape of an enormous rhinoceros.

It was 5 meters long! The frightening part was the incredibly large horn that was as big as its body. The enormous horn was a weapon that was used to crush castle gates. It reminded one of a battering ram.

Cast Iron Rhinoceros!

It was a level 180 Boss Monster. It possessed a variety of nicknames. It was called the Slaughterer of Tankers. The Tankers hated this monster the most. The second nickname..... The most popular amongst the nickname was Tankerbell! It rang the Tankers like a bell.

It was a Boss Monster that gave out expensive Items. In terms of worth, it was within the top 10. Of course, the ingredients that came out from this monster was used to make Rare and Epic Items. At the very least, these ingredients were sold for 5000 gold.

However, it was well worth the money considering the attack it would perform.

“Go!”

As soon as Hyrkan’s yell ended, the Cast Iron Rhinoceros charged



towards the Wall of Agony.

Koong, kwahng, koong, kwahng!

The ground shook as it ran.

Koong koong koong!

It accelerated in a flash.

The Cast Iron Rhinoceros was running at incredible speeds. Its large body looked ungainly, but it was flying across the ground as swift as a swallow.

In the end, the Cast Iron Rhinoceros' horn collided with the Wall of Agony.

Ggwahhhhhhng!

All the sound up until this point couldn't compare to this sound. It swept across the battlefield.

For a brief moment, Hyrkan was tense.

'Break through.'

He was most unsure of this part of the plan.



The Stormhunters guild had shown the level of attack one needed against the Wall of Agony.

That level..... It had to be a level 190 or above Magician or Striker. One needed to be equipped with Epic Items, and one also needed a full set of Buffs. On top of it all, one had to use a level 180 or above skill with burst damage!

If one considered these requirements, the Storm Queen Shir, Chev or Sinclair would be able to break the Wall of Agony.

However, Hyrkan couldn't produce such a large amount of damage in such a short amount of time.

This was the next best plan he could come up with. Since this was the next best plan, there was no guarantee that it would work.

Since he couldn't guarantee it would work, he couldn't help, but feel restless. He kept feeling the restlessness after he heard the huge boom.

[The Wall of Agony has fallen.]

However, when he heard the System Announcement, Hyrkan put on the same smile he had on in the beginning of the battle.



‘This is the finale.’

At that moment, Hyrkan was holding a pouch.

Each of this Bone Ingredients were worth 500 gold. These were made from the highest level Boss Monster available. The Bone Ingredients were from the Magma Giant, and it was the best Bone Explosive he could make.

Hyrkan ran towards the fallen Wall of Agony, and he threw all the explosives towards the Frost Knight.

Too-doo-doohk!

There were around 20 Bone Explosive thrown, and it rolled across the ground before they came to a stop beneath the Frost Knight’s feet.

Kwah-gwah-gwah-gwahng!

The sound of the explosions were heard, and the Frost Knight’s armor started to crack within this explosion.

In a flash, there weren’t any Cursed slaves left. There was only the Frost Knight left, and there were no obstacles or barriers between them.

He had one Skeleton Knight, 17 Skeleton Warriors, two Skeleton



Magicians, the Big Bird Fire Golem and the Rhinoceros Golem left. They all stared at a single opponent.

Hyrkan didn't even hesitate. He gave them consent.

“Kill it!”

There was only one problem left to solve.

2.

Once the armor came off, Hyrkan's damage dealing was overwhelming.

Even if the numerous Skeleton Warriors got a single blow in, it was as if several dozen Strikers attacking it. Powerful attacks were executed by the Golems, and the Skeleton Knights displayed their frightening capabilities. The Frost Knight also couldn't ignore the attacks from the Skeleton Magicians. On top of that, the power of the Bone Spears and Bone Explosives gave one goosebumps.

If one saw Hyrkan's battle, this person would describe it was as if a swarm of bullet ants in the Amazon jungle was attacking its prey. It was akin to the scary bullet ants that could take chunks out animal flesh that was several dozen times bigger than the ants.

Amongst this swarm of ants, Hyrkan was like a scorpion striking.



Since he had reached the last phase of the Frost Knight Raid, he decided to go all out.

[The Black Heart's effect has activated.]

Black Heart was the skill that he had acquired at a high cost!

It was a skill one used if one had a surplus of magic. He used the skill at that moment.

Hyrkan's physical ability was pushed well beyond the best Strikers in Warlord. His Strength stat was drastically increased, and this was the first time seeing Hyrkan with an overclocked Stat. Hyrkan started moving like a madman. The Frost Knight was fending off the small fries when Hyrkan saw an opening. He flew in on his target like a dart.

“Damn you!”

A despaired filled voice escaped the arrogant Frost Knight.

It happened as the despair-filled sound continued.

“This is the price for interfering with him. Your life isn't enough!”



Its voice changed into a curse.

It happened in an instant.

There was no warning. After the curse was put out, the Frost Knight's body exploded.

[The Frost Dragon's Curse has begun.]

The terrifying curse that had created the Frozen Kingdom swept over the battlefield.

This was the final act shown by the Frost Knight. There had been no signs that this last-ditch effort was coming.

The powerful curse froze the Skeleton Warriors, Knights, Magicians and the Golems.

It didn't end there.

Everything that was frozen started to crumble away. The Undead army, which had been filling the battle field, crumbled away into crumbs of ice. They were turned into piles of ice like a sand dune atop the frozen ground.

Of course, Hyrkan was also frozen in place. It was as if Hyrkan



was an ice sculpture. If this Raid was being broadcasted live, the chatting window would be filled with groans.

As if to make this worse, the underlings in front of Hyrkan was starting to crack.

As they started to crack, they started being turned into a pile of ice shavings.

However, as everything was crumbling away, Hyrkan appeared once again.

[The Circlet of Purification protected you from the Frost Dragon's Curse.]

He had already switched his Item beforehand. Hyrkan spoke with a smile on his face.

“That’s a wrap.”



## Chapter 149 – Ancient Power (2)

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3.

Flash!

In truth, the mattress he was lying on was unable to perform its original purpose, but Ahn-jaehyun was draped over it like a corpse. A blanket that was about to decay made the worn out mattress look shabbier. When both of his eyes opened, he kicked hard at the blanket.

“Ora ora ora!”

He let out a energetic shout as he got up. It was hard to believe that Ahn-jaehyun had been lying on the mattress like a lifeless corpse a moment ago. He was showing a frightening level of energy as he walked towards the restroom.

He immediately put a big dollop of toothpaste on his toothbrush, then he looked at himself through the small mirror inside his restroom. He was quite skinny. He was in a sorry state where eating meat for a month straight might not be able to fix him. However, he thought he looked better than ever as he looked at his own reflection in the mirror.

If he was to exaggerate it a little bit, he looked like Leonardo DiCaprio in his prime when he failed to win his second Oscar. That was how great he thought he looked.



‘It is done!’

This was how much Ahn-jaehyun’s mind was set on what he’ll do.

‘Wait for me. I’ll kill any bastard that blocks my way. If anyone bothers the Hahoe Mask, I’ll fuck them over.’

Moreover, he was now qualified to think this way.

“Ooh-buh-buh-buh!”

He couldn’t help, but laugh even as he brushed his teeth. He was so happy that it was as if he was losing his mind.

Of course, the reason for his happiness was the game.

‘Frost! I got the Frost! Ooh-ha-ha-ha!’

He had caught the Frost Knight 8 hours ago.

He immediately logged out after finishing the Frost Knight Raid. When he came back to reality, he went straight to sleep.

It wasn’t as if he didn’t have work to do. Actually, he had too many things on his agenda to do. He had to organize the footages



he recorded, then he had to check what was going on in Warlord. He also had to calculate his bottom line.

However, he just went straight to sleep. It was true that he was tired from the Frost Knight Raid, but that wasn't the deciding factor. There was another reason.

His head was too crowded with miscellaneous thoughts. The inside of his head was a jumbled mess, and he couldn't organize his thoughts in his tired state. This was the reason why he had slept.

Then 8 hours had passed....

This was the longest sleep he had in the past year, so his head felt clearer than ever. Ahn-jaehyun could easily process the various types of joy he felt.

This was why Ahn-jaehyun was able to savor his own overflowing happiness.

‘Well, let's see the effect of the Frost... It can pretty much be used on anything.’

The most joyous part was the fact that he had gained the Ancient Power of Frost.

Basically, the Ancient Power could only be used on Rank A Skills. He couldn't use it on the Skills he had gained recently. On the other hand, it could be used on the Skills that he used as his main



power.

‘I guess the the Skeletons would change first. I wonder what kind of effect it would have on them?’

He had no idea what effect would be applied to them. He just knew it’ll be powerful. He was filled with happiness just from thinking about it.

However, this wasn’t the end to his good news.

‘If I do well on this Frozen Kingdom episode, I can get over 3 million purchases on my paid video.’

In truth, the part he was anticipating the most in the Frozen Kingdom episode was the profit from selling his paid video.

Before Ahn-jaehyun returned to the past, the Stormhunters guild didn’t broadcast the Frozen Kingdom episode live. The entire episode was filmed, and edited. Then they put the film on their live channel.

At the time, live broadcasts were considered to be the best way to deliver a content. However, the Stormhunters decided to try a new method. Since it was new, it was risky. However, this attempt lead them to striking gold.

Of course, they didn’t succeed just because they attempted something new. The Frozen Kingdom episode was played over a 15



day period, yet they edited it down to 3 hours of footage. Moreover, the video wasn't just done as if it was footage from a game. They planned out the scenario and plot. They produced it like a real movie. In this process, the Stormhunters had hired a famous Hollywood director. They basically created a movie using the Warlord as stage.

‘At the time, they had sold an incredible 3.9 million tickets to the paid broadcast.’

It had been a huge success!

The Frozen Kingdom episode film put out by the Stormhunters didn't get nominated in the Academy awards or Cannes film festival, but it did gain entrance in some famous film festivals. It received favorable review. This wasn't something one just forgot about after seeing it once. It was accepted as a piece of art.

Of course, no one had attempted this yet. If one wanted to attempt this, one needed a Main Scenario Quest type story to pull it off. However, no guild had monopolized the Corrupt Count or the Immoral Prince episode. The Hydra guild had attempted to monopolize the Corrupt Count episode, but in the end, they weren't able to kill the most important figure, the Corrupt Count. This pretty much nullified their attempt at a monopoly of a content.

It would be possible to make one with the Immoral Prince episode, but any deal needed the Hahoe Mask's approval.



This was why Ahn-jaehyun's attempt at this would be awesome and fresh to the audiences.

Of course, he was looking forward to this.

'I wonder if the Romani Films would be able to digest this.'

On the other hand, this was a full-length film. This would require a lot more professional editing than a regular movie. It was possible that the Romani film might become overwhelmed by this task.

Of course, the production cost would skyrocket. He had to expect the cost to be in the range of being able to buy one or two mid-sized sedans.

'Whatever.'

However, Ahn-jaehyun had enough money to pay it off in a lump sum.

'It's been advertised properly. I'll have to do this even if I have to empty my bank account.'

The Main Scenario Quest's content had suddenly changed, but on the other hand, Warlord had given out an incredible free advertisement for Hyrkan. Everyone would be anticipating the new footage from the Hahoe Mask. They'll be curious as to how the Hahoe Mask had opened a new era.



If he got past this part, he wouldn't have to spend money on Items.

‘There aren't that many level 200 Items available, and I wouldn't immediately have to spend money in purchasing those Items.’

In the past, he had to change his Item setting every time he leveled up. Moreover, it wasn't just about upgrading the Hahoe Mask. He also had to take care of each of his Skeletons too, and he had to figuratively sell his spine to equip them.

However, this wasn't the case any more.

The Ruined Kingdom episode had just started, and the Items above level 200 would start to come out in earnest. These would be Items for the Users that went through the 2nd Advancement. In other words, Ahn-jaehyun didn't have to purchase any more new Items.

If he needed to find a place where he needed to spend his money, it would be to equip the Death Knight he'll be able to summon soon. This would be after he went through the 2nd Advancement to become a Lich. However, it shouldn't cost too much.

‘I'll have to give either the Crying Sword or the Dethrone King's Sword to the Death Knight.’

The Death Knight was like a Lich's clone. Basically, any



permanent Items that were bound to the summoner could be equipped by the Death Knight. If he wanted to, he could even put a Hahoe Mask on it. Of course, the Death Knight wouldn't complain about being handed down used Items.

In the end, that was the most joyous part of all of this. The Hahoe Mask will show the fastest progress starting now from the Ruined Kingdom episode. The difference between the Hahoe Mask and the 30 great guilds would widen further.

As he brushed his teeth, Ahn-jaehyun saw a rosy future in front of his eyes.

‘Should I move to a new place?’

Should he move to an incredible penthouse? It would look over the Han River. Maybe he'll get the high-rise apartment where he'll be able to play the game with his V-Gear in front of the view of the Han River.

‘.....No. I have no problem playing this game here. The internet speed is quite fast here. Ah! Maybe I should buy a car?’

He could fill the parking lot with expensive sports car, and he could take a different car out each day. He thought about diligently playing a game with cool cars in a house with a garage.

‘.....however, there is no point in buying an expensive car right now. I don't have anywhere I want to go, and I don't have the



time. Moreover, the insurance price would be high. On top of that, the value of a car halves the moment I buy it. So what should I do? There must be a luxury item that I can splurge on right now. What kind of luxury item do I want?’

In truth, he wasn’t easily able to imagine this incredibly rosy future.

‘Yes. I’ll use this opportunity to buy the level 6 V-Gear! I wonder what kind of expression the Peach Store employees will have when I buy the level 6 V-Gear with a single payment.’

Ahn-jaehyun could now properly imagine his rosy future. He spat out the liquid through his smile.

After he washed his face, Ahn-jaehyun put his glasses back on. He was in a good mood as he turned on his Tablet PC.

‘I bet it’ll be plastered with stories about me.’

It was at that moment he saw it.

“Huh? What? The Stormhunters?”

He had missed an incredible development during the 8 hours he was asleep.



It was a monster with a half-translucent body, and it had a red light that was surrounding its body.

The bastard could spit out endless amount of flame, and it was hot enough to melt anything in its path. When the monster was at a disadvantage, it ascended to the top of the Urugal mountain, which was barren. It was able to avoid any disadvantage by turning the summit into a lake of flame. It also had the unreasonable ability to completely recover from large wounds.

It also had the most health of any monster that had appeared up until now. When it was angry, no one could take more than three attack from it. It was that strong.

Blaze Slime Dragon!

It protected the summit of the Urugal mountain range, and it was a monster amongst monsters with various unreasonable settings.

The only logical part about this monster was the fact that the Tankers and Strikers could draw its Aggro. Then the Magicians could do the damage dealing... The only way to take it down was using this simple plan. This simple plan that was needed to clear it was the only part that gave comfort to the participants.

Of course, a marathon was a race where one ran for 42.195km. In concept, it was a very simple sport, but the answer in how to finish it was tough to come up with.



There was no easy answer to defeating this monster.

This was why the strongest Users of Warlords, who had played Warlord for a number of years, gave up on this monster. These Users had defeated countless monsters that had been called the strongest, yet they openly abandoned this raid.

However, this monster had fallen in front of her.

[You've gained the Title 'One who Conquered the Urugal Mountain Range.']

[You've gained the Title 'Dragon Slayer.']

[You've gained the Title 'Owner of the Urugal Mountain Range.']

Stormhunter Queen Shir.

Most of her silver armor had melted away from the effect of the Slime Dragon's Slime Breaths. Even the skin underneath her armor was darkened. Of course, her hair and face was burnt too. She looked unsightly, and one couldn't even tell, who she was. However, she was alive.

She was alive as she looked at the Slime Dragon's end.



“Ooh-wah! Ooh-wah!”

There were only two of them left. Hatch was with her.

“We really caught it! Ooh-wah!”

In other words, they were the only two survivors.

Thirty Users had participated in the Blaze Dragon Raid, but their number quickly diminished as time passed. There would be no reattempt after this. The Slime Dragon’s Breath targeted the Priests before they could do anything. Even the Tankers couldn’t survive against its attack.

“Queen! We did it!”

Of course, the dead didn’t just stay silent.

– Hey! Hatch! Hatch! What happened?

– Has it ended?

– Did we really catch it?

The dead Users were still using the Voice Talk from outside the game to speak to those still in the game.



Hatch answered them.

“We caught it!”

At those words, cheer and silence started mixing with each other. The Voice Talk turned into a bedlam. Hatch had to hear all these sounds at once, and it was hellish to experience it.

However, Hatch enjoyed the situation.

‘This is crazy! We did it!’

They had experienced failing this Raid once, and they also viewed the Raid footage from the other 30 great guilds. With these information, they had come up with a battle strategy, but still it hadn’t been easy.

No, this was the most difficult Boss Monster that the Stormhunters guild had come across.

The worst part was the new phase that no other team had reached before. In an instant, the Blaze Slime Dragon had activated a self-destruct attack. It used the Slime Buster.

As it self-destructed, its body had become a huge bomb, and the fragments flew everywhere.

The unexpected attack had done an incredible amount of



damage. This single attack had instantly killed 11 Users. When they all suffered Game Over, Hatch wondered what dramas we would watch in the next 48 hours. He thought nothing good would come out of this run.

However, Shir didn't give up in such a situation. There would be no second chance for her. She immediately drew the aggro of the Slime Dragon, and Hatch became in tune with her movements as he used his magic.

It felt as if they were throwing eggs at a boulder. They were fighting for the sake of fighting, since they hadn't died.

However, the egg had eventually broken the boulder.

“Queen!”

Her appearance was unsightly, but at that moment, Shir really looked like the Queen.

Shir replied when she saw Hatch.

“Hatch!”

When Shir called his name, Hatch had a deep smile on his face as he opened both his arms. In such a scene, didn't the surviving members suppose to hug each other?



However, Shir's hug wasn't what came towards Hatch.

“Do you know what this Ancient Power is?”

“What? Ancient..... What did you just say?”

“The Ancient Power of Flame..... A weird reward was added on. Do you know anything about it?”

“What?”

“Do you know about it or not?”

At Shir's question, Hatch felt a need to come up with some answer.

“That is..... The only [Go-dae](#) I know is the university near the Ahn-ahm station.”

Go-dae means ancient, but it is also a shorthand way to refer to Goryeo university in Seoul. Goryeo=>Go. University=>Dae-hahk-gyo=>Dae

At those words, Shir glared at Hatch for a brief moment. Then she started talking to the others through the Voice Talk.



[Stormhunters. They succeeded in conquering the summit of the Urugal mountain range!]

[Storm Queen. She completely washed away her humiliation from the Immoral Prince Raid!]

[Ancient Power! It is the emergence of Warlord's Skill Enhancement Content!]

Around half a day ago, Warlord was filled with stories about the Hahoe Mask and the arrival of the 3rd Main Scenario Quest. Now it was filled with news about the Stormhunters.

Of course, the inside of Hyrkan's head was filled with stories about the Stormhunters guild.

‘She got the Flame.’

Even after he entered the game, he was unable to do anything. He just looked at the Hologram window as he looked over the online articles. He was deep within his thoughts.

‘This doesn't make any sense. The Blaze Slime Dragon was suppose to give an Ancient Rank. Yet she got the Flame?’

The Stormhunters guild had succeeded in conquering the summit of the Urugal mountain range.



This fact was surprising in itself. Hyrkan was well aware of how difficult it was to catch the Blaze Slime Dragon. It being difficult was an understatement. First, it was impossible to do anything near it. It didn't register any parts of its body being severed. It could just turn the surrounding into a lake of fire to nullify any damage it took from attacks. It was an unreasonable Boss Monster to face.

The cherry on top was the 3rd phase. If the Users didn't know about the Slime Buster, everyone in the party was pretty much killed. It was an AOE attack, and it was incredibly powerful. It was an AOE attack on the same tier as the Frost Fog he suffered at the end of his battle with the Frost Knight. It wasn't something one could avoid. It was an AOE attack where the only solution was to endure it.

Fortunately, Hyrkan had prior knowledge about these types of attacks, so he was able to plan for it. However, the Stormhunters guild had gone in blind, and they had succeeded.

Of course, this wasn't their first attempt. They had pretty much perfected the method to clear the early and mid portion of the Raid, but it was still an incredible accomplishment.

‘What is going on?’

However, the more surprising part about this was the fact the Storm Queen obtained a Mythos Rank Ancient Power. She had the biggest impact on the Blaze Slime Dragon Raid, so she had gained the Flame.



‘What changed?’

If events followed like Hyrkan’s memories, the Ruined Kingdom episode started when one conquered the summit of the Urugal mountain. Afterwards, the Ancient Power content had appeared. However, the Mythos Rank Ancient Power appeared two months after the Blaze Slime Dragon was taken down.

The Mythos Rank Ancient Power had appeared as a reward for clearing the Frost Knight and the Blaze Slime Dragon.

Of course, this wasn’t too strange of an occurrence.

‘Did they change the difficulty of the Quests?’

According to Tobot Soft, the AI selected the difficulty based on how fast the game was progressing. Moreover, this determination process was so complex that developers wouldn’t be able to change the difficulty on their own. If they changed it, it would cause a System Error.

Basically, this was the cumulative result of the recent events. This was the answer given by Warlord to match the swift progress shown by the Users.

In other words, the information he knew wasn’t the answer any more. It can only be used as reference material.



Hyrkan closed both his eyes.

Until a moment ago, he had been so happy in many ways that he couldn't get a handle on his thoughts. However, his head was surprisingly cool right now.

'I have about 43% left before I reach level 200. I don't have the Ifrit's Tears, but if I hunt as I travel towards the Terube castle wall..... I'll be able to reach level 200 in one or two days.'

His cool head had to face up to the reality.

He wasn't behind, but that didn't mean he was far ahead either.

He wouldn't be running the race by himself.

In the end, he had only one thing he could do.

'Yes, let's do this. Let's see who gets trampled.'

He had to sprint with all his might to shake off his competitors. This was what Hyrkan had to do.



# Chapter 150 – Ancient Power (3)

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6.

Across the Terube Castle Wall...

Originally, the Battlefield was a minor content that only the Users, who knew about it, enjoyed. Now it was a major stage where everyone, who enjoyed Warlord, knew about it.

It was the stage where Killer Sinclair, who represented the Big Smiles guild, had earned his frightening yet memorable nickname. It was also where the Hydra guild had stumbled as they were pushing forward without a hitch. However, it was most known as the place where the Hahoe Mask had declared his war against the 30 great guilds.

Several historic moments in Warlord had occurred consecutively on this stage.

This stage held a sense of magic, adventure, and romance. It stoked one's desire to explore.

Naturally, the Northland became a hot spot.

The Users that met the requisite level and even the Users that hadn't reached the requisite level were crossing the Terube castle wall. They were all headed towards the Northland.



However, the Northland was far from the paradise dreamt up by the Users. Their imagination had been tinted by romanticism.

The world thought the Northland was now owned by the Hahoe Mask. This was why no guild could insist on management rights, ownership rights or autonomous rights. Moreover, the Hahoe Mask didn't plan on managing his territory.

On top of it all, the Northland didn't have a castle or a town to use as a reset point. The Users gathered in places, but these were very laughable locations. It couldn't be considered to be waypoints. Everyone returned to the Terube castle wall when they died.

This was why all kinds of behaviors that were considered to be bad manners were being carried out here. No one in the near vicinity would stop these acts from being carried out. No one was here to manage these lands. It was a type of location where PK could be carried out if there was a problem with another User. This was a legit method to buy significant amount of time against other Users.

At some point, the Northland turned into a lawless paradise.

Of course, those that were still surviving and playing in this lawless paradise of the Northland weren't normal Users.

“How many were we able to get?”



“If we count those we caught a moment ago, we have a total of 17.”

“We are earning a good income. All the people here have pretty good Items. If we stay here, we could probably gain enough money to play this game for a whole year.”

These Users were like fighting dogs with their collars taken off. The Users that took up PK as a job promoted this lawlessness in this lawless lands.

There were some that enjoyed this aspect of the game. Warlord’s system didn’t stop PKs. There were no penalties given. Warlord actually had contents that accounted for Users that enjoyed PK.

Currently, three Users were counting the number of wristwatches obtained through PK. Moreover, they did something that added to the fun.

“It is as I predicted. This will end all our problems if we wear this! It’ll end it! I told you guys we should have used it earlier! Even if I tell you good advice, you guys can’t even comprehend it.”

“All right. Good for you. You are smart. Why didn’t you use that smart head of yours in college?”

“Are you trying to pick a fight with me?”

“Hey! Stop it! It is very distracting to see people wearing the same



masks fight each other.”

The group consisted of a swordsman, a magician and a priest.

They all held different Classes, but they were all borrowing the face of someone that was more famous than Ironman and Batman in Warlord.

“Still, I can’t believe the Hahoe Mask is working so well. Everyone becomes afraid from just seeing this.”

Hahoe Mask.

This was the identity of the masks they were wearing.

Of course, they didn’t have any relations to the actual Hahoe Mask. They weren’t even acquaintances. If one had to put a label on the relationship, it was something like a connection between a star and his fans. Currently, it was closer to victim and the identity thieves.

In truth, they weren’t the only ones doing this. It wasn’t too hard to find Users wearing the Hahoe Mask in various towns and castles. Moreover, there were a fair number of them that were using it to take advantage of the Hahoe Mask’s reputation.

It was clear that the presence of the Hahoe Mask was the strongest across the Terube castle wall in the Northlands.



“This place is the Hahoe Mask’s domain. Of course, it is a matter of course.”

“Still, I become occasionally startled when I catch sight of one of us.”

The fact that the Hahoe Mask’s reputationi was strong meant that this method was powerful and effective.

Most Users, who caught sight of the Hahoe Mask, in a hunting ground would find their hearts were trembling. For the Hahoe Mask’s fan, there was a possibility of coming across the real one. The anticipation made their hearts tremble. For those that crossed the Hahoe Mask before, it made their heart flutter from fear.

If one used their trembling heart against these Users, one would be able to have a good time. These three Users were using it to their advantage.

Ooh-uh-uh!

The sound rang in their ears.

‘It’s a Hammer Head!’

They recognized the owner of this distinctive roar. As if it had been rehearsed, the three Users stopped their conversation, and



they turned their head towards where the sound had emanated. Afterwards, they smiled as they looked at each other.

“Shall we go gather up more wristwatches?”

They aimed to attack the Users, who were in a desperate situation. It was a very cheap thing to do, but the three of them didn't feel any compunction at carrying out this act.

“Let's assess what he are working against, then let's get to work.”

“I hope we meet a juicy prey.”

“I might get addicted to this.”

They quickly moved towards the ruckus to meet the new sacrificial lamb that was to their taste.

7.

“Shit!”

The User, who was wearing a Hahoe Mask and a magician's robe, swore. He was in a rough shape. It was as if he was wearing a layer of ice over his clothes. Large chunks of ice were infused into the User's clothes.



It wasn't a good feeling. The chunks of Ice were cumbersome weights that restricted movement.

[The Frost's power has invaded into your bones. All Stats and movement speed will be decreased.]

They were in a jungle filled with overgrown vegetation. It was muggy enough to be uncomfortable yet he was feeling a chill. He was in an unpleasant and disagreeable state, but there was something that was more baffling than the cold.

What truly made the magician User be disconcerted was the Skeleton Warrior letting out a cold breath in front of his eyes.

“Shit!”

The magician was like a parrot repeating his words. Resist was a vocabulary that wasn't even present in Cervid's mind right now. His actions were unbecoming of the mask he was wearing. In Warlord, the Hahoe Mask signified a hero that possessed an indomitable will, power and excellence.

However, if his plight was explained to others, everyone would understand why he was acting this way.

Cervid had come face-to-face with the Skeleton Warriors. Moreover, he saw a User that fit the Hahoe Mask the most



standing behind these Skeletons.

It was the real deal.

It was Hyrkan, who had ushered in this Third Age!

He was here.

Moreover, there wasn't anything special that had lead Cervid to face the real Hahoe Mask as an enemy. When their group saw a single User face off against the large monster Hammer Head, they didn't hesitate. The three of them conducted a pre-emptive attack against this User. Afterwards, Cervid's two companions suffered the consequence of their pre-emptive attack.

Once Cervid face the consequence of his actions, this would all be forgotten.

“I...I'm sorry. I'll give you all the watches. Just spare me.”

At that moment, Cervid finally came up with a sincere apology. In reality, the apology was his only chance at getting out of this situation. The only way he would be able to walk around the Terube castle wall alive would be through the Hahoe Mask's mercy and generosity.

Of course, this didn't mean his two wrists would come out of this unharmed in any case.



Moreover, this Hahoe Mask wasn't the Hahoe Mask he had seen through countless videos.

The expensive armors were infused with Frost, and unlike the fiery eyes one could see through the helmets, the Skeleton Warrior's eyes were like sculpted ice that shone like gems. There was a continuous white breath emitted from within the helmet, and the sound of its breathing was cold as ice.

Moreover, it wasn't just the outer appearance. They were emitting a cold that was frightening.

“Please! I'll never do this again!”

In front of this cold air, Cervid once again asked for forgiveness in a desperate voice.

However, Hyrkan didn't answer Cervid's yell. He flicked his finger twice as an answer.

The Skeleton Warriors on standby moved as if they had been waiting for this. They attack all at once.

“Shit! You son of a bitch!”

In the end, Cervid revealed his true feelings towards Hyrkan. Before Cervid could curse any more with his words, the Skeleton



Warriors chopped Cervid's body into pieces.

Hyrkan approached Cervid once the Hammerhead was taken care by his two Skeleton Knights.

When all the variables that could threaten him was dispatched, Hyrkan moved towards Cervid's corpse.

He looked at the three that was wearing his symbol on their faces. He honestly felt good about it.

‘Crazy bastards.’

There was no reason why he should feel bad about it. In the first place, the Hahoe Mask hadn't been created by Hyrkan. It was something anyone could wear, and it wasn't hard to make.

Moreover, Hyrkan didn't care if other people chose to wear it.

‘I guess I've been living too much on the straight and narrow these days. These bastards dare to put on the Hahoe Mask.’

Hyrkan didn't want to make the Hahoe Mask a symbol of justice. Hyrkan wanted the image of the Hahoe Mask to frighten even the skilled Users of the 30 great guilds, and this would in turn allow the skilled Users to vent their anger on those that tried to copy the Hahoe Mask.



‘Well, I made some money thanks to them.’

On top of it all, the Users that put on the Hahoe Mask were like monsters. There was no consequences in attacking them.

After taking all the watches, Hyrkan turned to look at the Skeleton Warriors and Skeleton Knights. A smile finally formed when he looked at them.

This was a smile that came out when he felt satisfaction at the effect of the Ancient Power of Frost.

‘It’s beyond expectation.’

After leaving the Frozen Kingdom, he continued to hunt and level up as he headed towards the Terube castle wall. At the same time, he started checking and analyzing the power of Frost.

The result of this power was the best. The smile on his face was an understatement.

After seeing the abilities displayed by his Skeleton Underlings, it wasn’t enough to give them a perfect score.

When the power of Frost was imbued into them, his Skeleton Underlings’ All Stats and mobility was increased by 20%. Moreover, the Chill was very useful in effecting nearby enemies. As one became exposed to it longer, the Chill effect changed into the Frostbite effect.



The Frost Golem was also the best. When it appeared, it immediately made all enemies feel the Chill. It couldn't be compared to the Earth Golem, which could only use the Hardening skill.

Then there was the Frost Bone Armor. It froze anyone that came in contact with the Frost Bone Armor. It was useful in hunts and PK battles.

The one that exceeded expectation the most was the Bone Explosives. When the Bone Explosives reinforced by the power of Frost was detonated, the explosion gave much more damage than before, and it froze anything in the radius of the explosion. It could quickly give the Frostbite effect to the enemies, and it was also great at interfering with the mobility of the target.

Of course, it wasn't as if there weren't any downsides.

‘The magical energy is consumed much faster than I had expected....’

When the Ancient Power of Frost was activated, any Skills that benefited from the power of Frost consumed 2.2 times more magical energy. It also meant that it took him 2.2 times more magical energy to maintain his summons. In recent days, he hadn't thought his Magic Power stat was lacking, but now he wasn't unable to summon all his Skeletons with the power of Frost activated.



The only thing he found lacking was the fact that the power of Frost was only applied to the Summon Skill Tree. However, he had already been aware of this fact.

Still, the power of Frost was incredible. If everything had worked out as planned, he would have still been drunk on this power.

‘That bitch Shir probably has something comparable.’

However, at that moment, Hyrkan wasn’t the only one that possessed this surprising power. This fact made him worry more.

Hyrkan turned his gaze away from the Skeleton Warriors.

‘How long will I have to fight that bitch? That’s the question I’m curious about now.’

The rumors regarding famous people usually spread like wildfire.

Hahoe Mask and the Storm Queen.

Of course, the rumors regarding the two most famous Users in Warlord spread much faster than a wildfire.

In the case of the Storm Queen, it wasn’t really rumors. She had started advertising herself.



She didn't show any hesitation in showing off the Ancient Power of Flame to the people that were interested in the Stormhunters guild through footage. The Storm Queen was using powerful yet diverse set of Skills that was infused with the power of the Flame. The presence of the Storm Queen surprised the Users, and her competitors felt at a loss.

- Isn't this too much of a cheat?

- The other Users can't measure up to them.

- Will all the Ancient Power be able to do that? Or is this unique to her Skills?

- Shit. If I was born with a gold spoon in my mouth, I would have been able gain that too!

- ┐ It isn't just about the golden spoon. Even if you had founded Tobo Soft, you wouldn't be able to gain that power.

- ┐ I agree.

In the case of the Hahoe Mask, everything was a rumor. The Hahoe Mask hadn't revealed what he had earned in his ventures. Instead, the rare footages that were taken by Users was the origin of the rumors.

These weren't the usual Skeleton unit used by the Hahoe Mask. This Skeleton army left behind traces of Frost. It was clear



evidence that the Hahoe Mask had gained a new power.

It was the emergence of the Frost Skeletons!

It was as if these Skeletons were tailor made for the Hahoe Mask, so of course, the Users were interested in it.

– He's the Lich King.

– Yes, he's the Lich King.

– Lich King sounds a bit tacky. Since the Hahoe Mask is incredible wealthy, how about we call him Rich Lich?

– ㄴ That's pretty good.

– ㄴ I agree with Rich Lich! Let's make this happen!

Of course, there were other issues that dominated the news.

There was the release of the Second Advancement Skills, and the battle footages displayed by the upgraded Users were much more fancy. Moreover, more information about the Ancient Power content was slowly trickling out, and it was enough to put a firm grip on the interest of the Users. It was that appealing.

The new contents were fun even for the lower ranking guilds



that were below the 30 great guilds.

Moreover, the market was now overflowing with contents from Warlord Users. There was the live broadcasts, youtube live stream, paid videos, pay-per-view tickets and the marketing market. The market was reaching its peak. It was hard to fathom before, but people were able to gain fame and money through playing a game well.

The Renaissance was in full swing!

Accompanying the start of the Renaissance era, the Hahoe Mask's Frozen Kingdom footage was revealed to the world.

8.

“You did well! You did really well!”

After Romani ended his conversation, he threw the headset on his head backwards towards his bed.

He clenched his fist as he sat on the chair.

‘We finally did it.’

Recently, Romani hadn't had a proper night of sleep. He couldn't remember when he had a proper night of sleep. That was how hard the recent days were.



However, at that moment, Romani felt pleased instead of being tired. It was almost enough to make him develop insomnia.

‘I would have never expected to work on a same project with such great people. I never would have expected to produce such an amazing product!’

Romani raised his clenched fist above his head.

Everything had started with the Hahoe Mask. Hahoe Mask had sent a massive amount of footage. The footage of the Frozen Kingdom wasn't measure in minutes. It was a 20 days worth of footages.

The Hahoe Mask didn't make an order. The Hahoe Mask asked a question that was closer to being a request.

He wanted to make a long piece that lasted 2 to 3 hours. He wanted to know if Romani would be able to make it like a movie.

When he received the question, he flat out refused to do it.

There was a massive difference between editing footage to make a short film and making a movie. Romani's ultimate goal was to produce movies, but Romani knew better than anyone that he still had a long way to go. He wasn't confident in his current capabilities.



‘I apologize. It is impossible to do this by myself....’

When he gave his answer, the Hahoe Mask asked another question.

He didn’t mind bringing in others to collaborate on the project. The Hahoe Mask was willing to foot the bill, and he wanted Romani to, at the very least, attempt it.

At that point, Romani started to inquire through his contacts. He got a hold of people that worked around the movie industry.

As if people had been waiting for this day, incredibly famous people in the industry started contacting him to work on the project. There were even skilled veterans within Hollywood that were pushing for this opportunity. Even one of the top line directors, who produced a movie with a budget of several hundred millions, were giving him enthusiastic advices.

The people on the project received salaries that were pennies on the dollars compared to their reputation, yet they were all participating in this project with a fervor.

‘Yes. Everyone had been thirsty.’

Of course, the passion exhibited by these individuals weren’t based on money.

Currently, the world called Virtual Reality was changing this era.



Moreover, they were able to acquire the best ingredients that could be acquired in the world right now. The Warlord's best player, the Hahoe Mask, had provided the ingredients, and they wanted to make a proper film!

This was a product that had been created by like-minded individuals, and it was way above Romani's expectation.

This was why Romani could guarantee it.

'This film about Warlord.... No, this might be a historical turning point in the VR movie industry.'

In the future, when movies staged in a VR were discussed by the movie executives, Romani and his associates would always be included in the discussion. His work would be discussed with the previous greats he had grown up watching. His work would be mentioned with the works of Quentin Tarantino, Spielberg and James Cameron.

'It is unfortunate that the Academy Awards doesn't have a Virtual Reality category. If it did, I'll be able to attend the Oscars.'

Romany felt a laugh come on when he thought about attending the Academy Awards in a suit.

It was a happy thought, but at the same time, it was ridiculous.

At that moment...



‘Huh?’

Romani looked at his wrist. The smart watch vibrated, and it informed him, who was calling him. It had caller ID.

When Romani saw who was calling him, he immediately waved the left hand that was equipped with the watch.

A phone shaped hologram started circling around Romani like a satellite.

“Yes. Please speak.”

– Mr. Romani. Do you think I’ll be able to have a private conversation with you?

A grave voice was heard from the nearby speaker.

“Any time.”

This was a call from a collaborator, who had worked on the Hahoe Mask’s film from the start to finish. Until recently, he hadn’t even known the name of this man, but he was a partner that was qualified to have a personal conversation with him.

– I want to meet the Hahoe Mask. Do you think you’ll able to act as a bridge?



On the other hand, Romani wasn't close enough to this man that he would agree to such a request.

Romani had a sour expression on his face.

"I'll have to ask the Hahoe Mask through e-mail first."

Romani wasn't Hahoe Mask's manager. The Hahoe Mask didn't need to work him Romani. He was Romani's most important client, and the sudden request for an introduction was a complete non-starter.

– If you can give me his e-m.....

"I'll ask him about that too."

After Romani cut him off with his curt words, he clenched his fist around the phone that was hovering around him. The call was ended, and Romani had a ill-humored expression on his face.

Hahoe Mask always had felt like his exclusive actor, but now that was about to change. This was what put him in a disagreeable mood.

However, the displeasure turned into bitterness.

'Once this film is released, all the major film companies will line



up wanting to work with the Hahoe Mask.'



# Chapter 151 – Death Knight (1)

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1.

Everyone was waiting for this movie. The release date hadn't been set, yet it was suddenly out on the market. It was analogous to a person receiving a present from one's significant other at one's surprise party.

This was the kinds of feeling evoked when the Hahoe Mask's paid film called 'The Frozen Kingdom' was released.

The film was unprecedented in many aspects.

The fact that it had a running time of 153 minutes was shocking in itself.

Moreover, it wasn't just footages of several monster fights, and the Boss Monster Raid. There was a single overarching plotline from start to finish. It was edited like a movie, and it attempted things that had never been tried before in the market of Warlord.

It was unprecedented.

It was also priced at 9 dollars. Normal paid videos sold for an average of 1.6 dollar. It was an unprecedented price where it was almost 6 times the average price.



The most unprecedented part was the fact that the video had sold a million copies on the day of its release.

It was a string of unprecedented results, and eventually, it drew out a public response that was worthy of such unprecedented events.

– Wow!

– I can't believe footage from Warlord could be use to make such a video.

– This isn't a simple video. It's a movie! A movie!

– How much would a movie of this scale cost using CG in Hollywood?

– This movie could be shown at the theaters.

– It is better than most movies that are coming out right now.

The praise from the audiences had started in earnest.

[Frozen Kingdom. It is a making of an art piece instead of a product.]

[Hahoe Mask. His competition next year isn't the 30 great guilds.



Instead, it'll be against other Oscar nominees.]

[For those who dream about being in a movie in the future, this film is like a bible to follow.]

Of course, the press was also full of praise.

The world was sending praise towards the Hahoe Mask, and the interest didn't end just there.

A rush of love calls started.

[Various media companies has sent love calls to the Hahoe Mask of 'The Frozen Kingdom'!]

[It is quickly being considered for an Oscar. Will this open the door to the era of Virtual Reality?]

Hahoe Mask's movie was submitted into famous movie festivals, and a community within the movie industry argued for the formation of a new category. Some officials within the movie festivals argued for a VR movie award. Then there were the movie production companies and distributing agencies in Hollywood, who boasted a long and storied heritage, that wanted to distribute Hahoe Mask's movie. A variety of offers to sponsor and work with the Hahoe Mask was made.

Hahoe Mask's unprecedented movie had simply moved past the world called Warlord, and it was influencing various field of



business in the real world.

Of course, the unprecedented move was a shock to some people. The Hahoe Mask's biggest rivals were the 30 great guilds, and they were so shocked that it made everything in front of their eyes turn white.

‘This doesn't make any sense.’

Chev watched the 153 minute movie in a subdued manner. He was agonizing over his thoughts instead of marveling at the movie.

‘No matter how I think about it, this doesn't make any sense.’

At first, he was in awe. He hadn't been mesmerized by the Hahoe Mask's excellent battle skill. There was a story here. It wasn't just a hunt. There was a reason behind why he caught the monsters, and the Hahoe Mask's actions all foreshadowed the battle with the Frost Knight. The storyline culminated like a flower blooming at the Frost Knight.

‘How did he think of such.... No, this isn't just about coming up with an idea to do this. How was he able to attempt it in such a manner? How did he know his Quest would progress like that?’

The Hahoe Mask was an adversary of the 30 great guilds. He hadn't hesitated in declaring a guild war on the Big Smile guild, but no one had taken it too seriously. The Hahoe Mask never backed down against the 30 great guilds.



The Hahoe Mask boasted the ability to produce high quality paid videos, and he was bringing in a significant amount of income. However, the 30 great guilds had the live channels. Basically, they were in a different market from what the Hahoe Mask did.

The Hahoe Mask always showed surprising result, but it had always been within expected standards.

However, this time the Hahoe Mask had exceeded the standard. Chev had thought the 30 great guilds were running next to the Hahoe Mask as competitors. Chev had thought the Hahoe Mask was just slightly in front of them in the race. However, it seemed the Hahoe Mask had been running to launch himself into the air for flight.

‘Shit.’

The Hahoe Mask was an irregularity, and he always messed up the status quo. Now the 30 great guilds would have to react to the new standard set by the Hahoe Mask.

‘Do we have to follow after the Hahoe Mask’s footsteps? Or should we battle him with some other exclusive contents? Will we have to go out and scout movie professionals? How much of our budget would we have to allocate in such a venture? How long will it take for the project to deliver results? In Warlord, it is critical to swiftly put out new contents. Will we be able to make a movie in such a short amount of time?’



Chev was bombarded with worry upon worry.

Moreover, at the same time, all the officers of the 30 great guilds were going through a similar thought process as Chev.

Of course, the first one to come up with an answer was the Stormhunters guild.

“I don’t care how much we spend. There is a subsidiary company that received investment from us. I want you to recruit movie professionals from that company.”

“Yes.”

“After gathering the individuals, I want them to immediately using the footages we have as the groundwork. I want them to start producing short movies that lasts around 30 minutes.”

“Yes.”

“I want to you to make sure that we have a new movie ready to be broadcasted every Friday at 9 PM. We have to have our first airing next Friday no matter what.”

“Yes.”

“If there is a problem in production, I don’t want you to dick around. I want you to contact me directly.”



“Yes.”

“Moreover, I want you to contact the Hahoe Mask through his Youtube page. Tell him our side wants to be in charge of distributing his movie. Tell him we will give him the full treatment.”

“What? Wouldn’t he just ignore it?”

“Just do it.”

“Yes.....”

Che-sulyun couldn’t even finish the Hahoe Mask’s video. She moved immediately after 10 minutes into the movie.

She spoke to the members of the Stormhunters guild.

“Every member that is above level 180 will cross the Urugal mountain range.”

– What? If it is above level 180, we have around 300 members. You want all of them to cross the Urugal great mountain range?

The current power structure was crumbling right now, and if they wanted to survive, it was important for them to be aggressive. As a guild master of a 30 great guild, she knew this better than



anyone.

“Is there a problem?”

– If I say there’s a problem, what will happen to me?

“I’ll can you.”

– After much thought, I have no problems with the plan.

She had the power to cause change in the Stormhunters with a single word.

Then there were those that didn’t merely react to the unprecedented event. There were those that insisted on resisting against it.

‘It is war now.’

When Sinclair saw the Hahoe Mask’s video, he knew they couldn’t coexist in Warlord. This hunch became reality in an instant.

[We have to eliminate the Hahoe Mask. He is our top priority. If you find his tracks, use every method and scheme to eliminate him.]



A new era truly dawned on Warlord.

2.

Black Hound.

It was similar to the one that appeared at the entrance to the Urugual mountain range. It was one of the most difficult mid-sized monster amongst similar level monsters. It was especially problematic that it was programmed to attack the Priests first. This was why it had the nickname of Priest Hunter, and it caused a lot of headache for the Users.

However, in an online game world, nothing was superior to level!

Kuh-hung, kuh-hung!

It was the same for the Black Hound. It could only let out a pitiful cry in front of the level difference. It was merely a pathetic dog.

Kuh-hung!

Its front right leg and left hind leg were severed. Its entire body was covered in wounds, and a large amount of ice was forming on the wound. The Black Hound was beyond looking pitiful. It looked to be in a brutal state.

The more devastating fact was that the enemy that had put it in



such a state was still in front of the Black Hound.

It was a Knight instead of a Skeleton Warrior.

Moreover, it wasn't just a simple Skeleton Knight. It was equipped with the Great Battle Hero's Sword, which was one of the strongest weapons in Warlord. It also wore a level 190 Unique defensive set called Blood Ogre set. At its peak value, this set was sold for 20 thousand gold. The Skeleton Knight was equipped with such strong Items.

Moreover, it was letting out a bluish cold energy thanks to the Ancient Power of Frost. Then there was the passive ability of the Blood Ogre set that decreased the enemy's Stats by 15%.

The Skeleton Knight taking down the Black Hound was akin to killing a chicken with an electric saw.

No human in this world would use an electric saw to slaughter a chicken.

'I made a very firm pledge that I'll hunt down every single of you bastards.'

It was retribution.

In the distant past, he had travelled the Urugal mountain range to visit the Blacksmith Olf. He had been humiliated by the Black Hound during this trip. At the time, his heart was filled with



frustration and a desire for revenge. Hyrkan was burning away this desire at that moment.

Of course, he wasn't at the Urugal mountain range just to fulfill his pledge.

Hyrkan raised his head to look at the summit that was veiled by fog.

'I can't believe it took me over two weeks to get here.'

A lot of things had happened as he was coming here. It wasn't just the volume. It was also the magnitude the events.

The production process of the Frozen Kingdom he released yesterday hadn't been easy. He had to put it out as fast as possible. When he tried to accelerate the production process, naturally the cost skyrocketed. He invested almost twice the production cost he had initially estimated. The cost was being discussed in terms of hundred thousand dollars.

Aside from his movie, Hyrkan had a lot of things to do. He had to sell the Items he had earned in the Frozen Kingdom, and he also had to sell the Items that weren't needed by his Skeleton underlings.

Then he had to purchase new Items. All the Items he purchased weren't cheap, and a significant amount of money were exchanged in the deals. He had to focus on the details of deal.



In the real world, he was busy meeting his lawyer, accountant and solicitors. He had to take numerous consultations and measures in regards to his taxes. He had been lax with his taxes, since he was busy with the game. However, the amount of money he was earning and spending was too large now.

Then there was that one incident when he purchased the 6S Model V-Gear. He paid an enormous amount of money to buy it, but there was a problem during the test phase. There was a range of preexistent setting, but none of them was suitable for Hyrkan. He was non-standard, so they had to program a new setting for him.

While this was all going on, he continued on the 2nd Advancement Quest. The 2nd Advancement Quest wasn't easy. It was annoying in the fact that he had to travel all over to meet the NPCs scattered all around the large continent. The ingredients from the monsters were scattered too. It was almost as if he was making pilgrimages to various locations in Warlord.

Of course, he had to focus on leveling up as he was doing all of this. There were a lot of Users that picked a fight with him, and he had to deal with all of them. He also got into a small war with a guild with a significant number of members. He was targeted more than any other User in Warlord. He was worth as much as a Boss Monster, so everyone in Warlord was his enemy now.

It was a mouthful to explain everything. He had to digest his busy schedule, and the fact that he was here was a miracle in itself.



It had taken him a long time to come here.

On the other hand, the fact that it took him a long time meant that he was finished with his preparation. He had organized everything around him, so he could focus on his game for awhile.

The Frozen Kingdom movie wasn't just something that had made a lot of money. It was an iconic piece that had a huge effect on Warlord and the VR market. Hyrkan had taken the nickname of Rich Lich from Subrata Duta. Unlike the original Rich Lich, he didn't have 5 million dollars to wield as a weapon. However, he was now able to buy most Item sets he wanted in a lump sum payment.

He had finished his 2nd Advancement. His Class as Necromancer had advanced to Lich, and he had gained the new Skills he had been waiting for.

He also bought the expensive consumable Items. Instead of looking at the price, he bought the most effective consumables.

Above all, he had finished solidifying his resolve.

Hyrkan no longer stared at the summit of the Urugal mountain range. He looked beyond it.

‘Let's do this.’

It didn't matter what was across the Urugal mountain range.



From now on, the obstacles won't be things he already knew about. New and surprising contents would unfold in front of him!

Hyrkan didn't plan on being taken aback by it. He had no thoughts of hesitating or backing down from the new challenge.

Even if he was broken into pieces from encountering a wall, he planned on running into it with full force.

Currently, his opponent was the Urugal mountain range, and he was at the midway point. He met the gatekeeper that guarded the waist of the mountain. It was the Skull Collector.

3.

If the Hahoe Mask had opened the era of the Northland exploration, the Stormhunters guild opened the era of climbing the Urugal mountain range.

It was hard to open the door to both these locations. If one hadn't made thorough preparation for these two places, these locations were ruthless in separating the users. It quickly and ruthlessly sorted out the prepared and the unprepared.

If one wanted to reach the Frozen Kingdom from the Northland, one had to cross the frozen land. This stretch of land judged the Users. In the Urugal mountain range, the foggy mid-slope of the mountain held a single tunnel that all Users had to pass. There was a judge dispatched at this location to sort out the Users. It was the



Skull Collector ‘Voodook’.

Voodook was an expression used by the Elven race of Warlord. The word signified a warrior that used the Voodoo arts. At the end of the Voodook’s tunnel, there was a middle boss monster named the Skull Collector.

It was level 200!

There were various skull of monsters hung around its neck, and it used the skulls to summon guardians that would defend the path. Alongside the summons, it used Voodoo skill on its enemies. It was a snake-headed giant that boasted enormous power.

Even if one gave this explanation, most Users wouldn’t be able to understand the overwhelming presence of this monster.

The monster was very strong, and it was very troublesome to face. Moreover, the guardians under the control of the Skull Collector was frightening. In terms of its offensive capability, it was currently one of the top monsters in Warlord. It was something that couldn’t be described unless one had faced it.

This was why a simple explanation was devised to describe the Skull Collector.

“Hahoe Mask-like bastard.”

“How will we catch that Hahoe Mask-like bastard?”



“Ah. That Hahoe Mask-like bastard is driving me nuts.”

Hahoe Mask-like Bastard.

Currently, this was the Skull Collector's nickname. It had strong offensive capability like the Hahoe Mask, and it commanded summoned familiars like the Hahoe Mask. Moreover, this monster was aggressive in participating in battle to show off its powerful offensive capability like the Hahoe Mask. This was why this nickname was attributed to this monster.

On top of it all, there were other factors that made this monster troublesome.

It was a monster that appeared in an Instant Dungeon, and an Instant Dungeon only allowed 7 members to enter. Moreover, once a party enters, one needed to wait 7 minutes before the next group can go in. It was a Dungeon that had a significant wait time.

It was an instant Dungeon, and there weren't any towns or castles near the Urugal mountain range. When one suffered a Game Over, one had to start over at a faraway location. This was why many considered it to be annoying.

It was called the alleyway to meet the Skull Collector, and there were a lot of challengers lining in front of the Voodoo's tunnel.

He appeared at this location.



“The Mercy guild failed? This isn’t something to take lightly. I don’t think any more clear methods will be released.”

“Hey, Hey.”

“How many days have we wasted here because of the Hahoe Mask-like bastard? This is driving me nuts.”

“Hey!”

“What?”

“Be quiet.”

“What?”

“I said shut up.”

“What are you trying to say?”

“The Hahoe Mask is here!”

“That’s right. The Hahoe Mask-like bastard is.... Huhk!”

Hahoe Mask Hyrkan had appeared at the entrance of the



Voodook's tunnel.



# Chapter 152 – Death Knight (2)

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4.

[Hyrkan]

– Level : 203

– Class : Lich

– Title : 199

– Stats :

Strength(2601)/Stamina(1617)/Intelligence(1662)/Magic Power(1989)

– In possession of the Ancient Power of ‘Frost’

[Skill List]

– Summon

[Skeleton Fragment(A)], [Madness Helm(A)], [Bone Armor(A)], [Skeleton Magician(A)], [Skeleton Science(A)], [Golem Summon(A)], [Hardening(B)], [Bone Explosive(A)], [Armament(A)], [Clay Play(A)], [Skeleton Knight(A)], [Chivalry (D)], [Bone Spear (E)], [Fire Golem (D)], [Death Knight (F)]

– Curse

[Demon Curse(A)], [Slow Curse(A)], [Corrosive Ghost(A)], [Blind(B)], [Curse Science(A)], [Lethargy(A)], [Voodoo Pictograph(C)], [Curse Resin (F)], [Curse Infection (D)], [Malignancy Curse (D)]

– Body Strengthening

[Skin Sewing(A)], [Leg Strength Modification(A)], [Fake Heart(A)], [Boiling Blood(B)], [Ocular Transplant (B)], [Steel



Bone(B)], [Life Vessel (B)], [Black Heart(E)], [Metal Tatoo(F)]

‘I ran around for two weeks, yet I only rose 3 levels. I wasn’t able to purchase any additional Skill Books.’

Hyrkan was looking at his Stats Window, and his Skill List. He was very unsatisfied with what he was seeing. Of course, any other User would consider what Hyrkan achieved in two weeks to be a huge achievement, but Hyrkan wasn’t playing by normal standards.

Of course, this caused Hyrkan to not realize that people were giving him queer looks.

‘Huh?’

Hyrkan was a step slow in realizing the mood of his surrounding. He belatedly raised his head.

When he raised his head, the first sight that greeted him was the pretty large tunnel entrance. It was large enough for a truck to drive easily through, and at the entrance, there were two frightening sculptures of monsters places on either side. In between the two sculptures, red strands that were woven in between were hanging limply.

The area around the tunnel was veiled in thick fog. The surrounding fog was so dense that it was hard to see. The Users



were currently holding their breath within the fog as all of them stared at a location.

Hyrkan was standing where they were looking, and their gazes were a healthy mix of suspense, wariness and hostility.

Of course, Hyrkan wasn't taken aback when he noticed their gazes a beat too late.

‘What a panicky group.’

He actually welcomed their gazes.

The gazes from his peers around him was the clearest evidence that reaffirmed his existence and ranking amongst the Users.

There was no reason why he should feel burdened by their gazes. Hyrkan boldly walked through the fog. He stopped in front of a well made wooden post. A skilled User had gathered the wood in the surrounding to make this handmade good.

There was a single piece of paper stuck to the wooden post. It was filled with English, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Korean. Names were written in various languages, and there were lines drawn through the names on the list.

This was the admission list for Voodook's tunnel.



Hyrkan used the brush attached to the bulletin board to add his name at the end of the line.

He wrote in Korean. Hyrkan wrote his name in block letters.

‘I bet someone will upload this to the SNS..’

As he was writing his name, he estimated the number of people in front of him.

After getting a rough estimate, Hyrkan clicked his tongue inside.

‘It’ll take four hours for my number to be called.’

There were a lot more Users in queue than expected.

‘I guess no information has come out yet.’

Currently, there weren’t any credible sources of information coming from across the Urugal mountain range.

No castle or town had been found there, so if one suffered a Game Over, one would have to climb the Urugal mountain range again. The fact that one quickly crossed the Urugal mountain range didn’t mean a rosy future was in front of the User.

Even after accounting for all these factors, numerous Users were



climbing the Urugal mountain range.

‘They are trying to cross over, because they don’t know that hell is awaiting them.’

The Ruined Kingdom across the Urugal mountain range was desolate and terrifying. If they knew what was awaiting them, they wouldn’t be so eager.

Of course, there was no reason for Hyrkan to reflect on their future difficulties. Hyrkan had to only worry about his own business.

‘The hunting ground around here is subpar. Maybe I should take a break, and come back in peak condition. Still, it feels weird sleeping for four hours right now.’

It happened as he was trying to digest his current problem.

“Are you the real Hahoe Mask?”

While he was agonizing over his decision, a voice intruded on his thoughts from behind him. Hyrkan turned his head to look.

It was a very unremarkable looking woman. She wouldn’t leave a deep impression even if he saw her in the streets. Moreover, her armor wasn’t something that was equipped with defense solely in mind. The armor looked like a slightly casual designer clothes. It was something the female Users wore, because it looked pretty. It



was seen quite often in regions where low level Users played.

However, the fact that she was wearing these kinds of clothes here told him a whole different story.

This was midway up the Urugal mountain. Amongst the currently discovered normal hunting grounds, this was one of the top 5 in difficulty.

This wasn't a stage where one could dress up and be pretentious. It meant she had the skills, guts, Items and level to dress in such a manner.

This was why Hyrkan didn't ignore her. Instead of ignoring her, he gave a reply as he tapped at his Hahoe Mask with his finger.

"I don't know. Aren't there a lot of fakes going around right now? Isn't that true?"

The female User immediately replied to Hyrkan's gesture.

Instead of a verbal answer, Hyrkan once again brought up his left wrist.... He tapped his wrist, which was covered with armor and glove.

Every skilled Users that had reached this point knew what that gesture meant.



The reaction didn't come from the female User in front of Hyrkan. The Users in the surrounding reacted.

“I think that's the Watchman Style!”

“Watchman? Ah! Is that where both Users sever their wrists to exchange their wristwatches and fight?”

“Huh? I thought Watchman Style was a method where one has to sever one's wrist and give one's watch to the Hahoe Mask. Isn't this a method used to ask for forgiveness from him?”

“You are all wrong. The Watchman Style indicates the price of the wristwatch. It always means ten thousand gold. He tapped it once, so if one wants to live, ten thousand gold has to be given to him.”

Of course, everyone gathered here had a different definition, but that wasn't a problem. The only fact that mattered was the fact that Users rarely got away with starting a quarrel with Hyrkan, and everyone was aware of this. That was all that was needed.

Of course, everyone was tense, but at the same time, they were entertained with what was going on.

“Aren't they from the Mig guild?”

“The Mig guild…….”



“They are below the Underfoot guilds, but they have a good amount of experts. Moreover, this guild is pretty lax in their members transferring out, so a lot of Users use this guild as a stepping stone to move up. Many Users from this guild eventually moved on to become members of the 30 great guilds or the Underfoot guilds.”

“What’s the Hahoe Mask’s chance of winning?”

“Hahoe Mask will win. However, it won’t be easy or boring.”

“If they don’t die in a boring manner, the footage would haul in a lot. It is profitable to be killed by the Hahoe Mask now.”

Currently, the Users gathered in front of the Voodooook’s tunnel wanted to cross the Urugal mountain range, and they all had the capability of earning a decent amount of money.

These Users could monetize a User’s death or loss by the Hahoe Mask.

The Users that were hidden in the surrounding was adept at maneuvering through these various factors.

“No. Wait a moment...”

As if she could feel the mood around her, the female User quickly



waved her hand as she spoke.

“I don’t have any plans to fight with you. I just want to make a deal with you.”

Hyrkan lightly nodded his head as an answer. It basically meant she should speak the terms of her deal.

“I’ll introduce myself first. I’ve been a part of a lot of organizations, but I’m currently with the Mig guild. My name is Queeng.”

Queeng.

It was unique name, but there was no reason why one couldn’t use such a name in the game.

The important part was the fact that he didn’t remember that name. This User has a unique name, yet he didn’t remember it. It meant this User was probably mediocre. At the very least, she was mediocre using Hyrkan’s standards.

She spoke about what she wanted to achieve.

“We are 3rd in line. Currently, there is an empty spot in my party. Would you perhap like to do this with us?”

The Users had been watching with bated breath, but they all let



out an exclamation when they heard her words.

‘Ah! Holy crap!’

‘Shit! I should have offered it first!’

‘We could have been carried!’

Naturally, the interest of the Users in the surrounding shifted towards what the Hahoe Mask would say next.

Will he turn down or accept the offer?

“The rights to the battle footage will all be mine.”

“Agreed.”

“Also, you guys have to listen to my directions no matter what.”

“If it is rational, we will.”

“Lastly, if you plan on fucking me over, I can guarantee you’ll have to pray to god that you won’t come across me on the other side of the Urugal mountain range.”

“I’ll keep that in mind.”



Hyrkan accepted the offer.

5.

The average level of the group was 203.

The 6 Users were all affiliated with the Mig guild, and they had all finished their 2nd Advancement.

However, their party composition was very unbalanced. Queeng was the only Tanker. There were three Magicians and two Priests. This was the 6 members. Originally, this party had another Tanker, but he couldn't get on due to personal reasons.

This was the reason why they offered this deal.

They had been about to cancel the run. They had no choice, but to delay the battle until next time. That was when they discovered the Hahoe Mask, and there was no downside in offering a deal to him.

Moreover, they hadn't just broken even in this deal. They had hit the jackpot.

"I told you a pretty face would work on him."

Of course, Queeng had the biggest role in making this deal



happen, so she was proud as a peacock. Normally, the other party members would have laughed at her for referring to herself as a beauty, but they tried hard to suppress their laughter. They just nodded their heads.

However, the atmosphere turned for the worse one minute after they entered the Voodook's tunnel. There was a heavy atmosphere pressing down on them. They had temporarily become party members with the Hahoe Mask, but he didn't talk to the other members.

Of course, it wasn't a situation where a conversation was appropriate. They had entered the Voodook's tunnel, and they had work to do. This was an Instance Dungeon. They had no choice, but to keep going forward. The tunnel itself was getting smaller as time passed, and they had to eventually move in a single line.

When they arrived at the entrance to the Instance Dungeon, a short conversation began.

Hyrkan was the one that opened up a dialogue.

"It is up to me as to when I want to step forward."

His words shut down the dialogue in an instant.

6.

When they exited the tunnel, they arrived at a large pit that



reminded one of the Colosseum.

At the center of the pit, there was a giant with a snake's head. It had the head of a snake, but its muscular body reminded one of an ogre. It wore a kilt made out of green leather, and there were various skulls hanging around its neck like a necklace.

Skull Collector!

Queeng was the first to get ready for the fight. She wore a bulky black armor, and she had an enormous shield that was as big as her body.

The Priests behind her had already placed 11 Buff Skills on her, and the Priest spoke the final phrase to her.

“In the name of the Holy Order.”

Queeng heard the System Announcement when the twelfth Buff was placed on her.

[You've received the blessing of the Holy Order.]

[All Buffs will be effective to twice its original time..]

[All Buffs will received 15% increase in effectiveness.]

Holy Order.



Buff Priests were a 2nd Advancement Class. When the one finished the Advancement, Priest received the blessing of the Holy Order. It was a dreamlike skill.

“Ok. You only live once.”

After receiving this dreamlike skill, Queeng didn't hesitate to charge the enemy in front of her.

“Charge!”

Queeng closed the distance in an instant, and she impacted the Skull Collector with her shield.

Kwahng!

The Skull Collector rolled backwards, and it immediately righted itself. Now it was the Skull Collector's turn. It jumped into the air, and it brought down its knife on Queeng's shield.

Kwah-ahng!

A loud sound exploded forth, and Queeng tried to find an opening as she endured the impact.

The Skeleton Collector used this opportunity to toss a skull in her general direction.



The skull rolled twice before the ground around it started to stir. It started forming arms, body and legs.

Ooh-uh-uh!

It appeared as it let out a long cry. It was a combination of a skull and a body of a Troll golem. It was 2 meters tall.

Puh-uhng!

An enormous fireball flew in, and the dirt Troll exploded as soon as it was formed. The aftermath of the explosion was so fierce that the backlash swept by the feet of the magicians and priests, who were keeping distance with the monster.

However, The magic only took out half its body. It started regaining its original shape.

“Shit.”

The magician spoke a sullen curse as he started his next Magic Casting.

During all of this, the Skull Collector picked out another Skull from his necklace, and it threw the skull.

“Quickly catch the summoned familiars!”



Queeng let out a shout. The magicians and priest gritted their teeth, since Queeng had shouted in the game and the Voice Talk at the same time.

There was only one clear method known to the public right now.

While the Tanker face the Skull Collector, one had to defeat its summoned familiars one by one!

At first, many Users tried to kill it before the Skull Collector could use his Voodoo Summon Skill. However, the only one who had been able to succeed using this method was the Storm Queen. If one wasn't as skilled as the Storm Queen, it was impossible to kill it in a short amount of time.

This was why the next logical clear method was to get rid of all of its underlings. This method usually required two Tankers.

However, Queeng was the only Tanker in this group. This meant the three Magicians had to use all their firepower to prevent the summoned familiars from stacking in number.

Kwah-ahng!

The powerful magic continued to bombard the battlefield, and it was effective. The first summoned familiar fell as it couldn't take a third hit from the magic. It reverted into being a Skull.



However, a third summoned familiar had come into being already.

This was all still within expectation.

However, there was two things they hadn't expected.

The first one was the fact that the Hahoe Mask hadn't moved. He was just looking at the battlefield.

The other unexpected outcome was.....

“Huhk!”

Queeng had been doing well blocking the powerful sword blows from the Skull Collector, but she couldn't properly block its parallel sword strike. She was sent flying.

Queeng flew like a bird as she was planted into the wall. At that moment, the three Magicians and two Priests were taken aback, but they moved at the same time.

“Ready the Range Magic!”

“I'll erect a Firewall!”

The Magicians readied their magic to buy some time.



“I’ll leave the rest to you.”

“Please give me a Haste Buff.”

One of the Priest put his life on the line as he ran through the battlefield. He was trying to reach Queeng.

Hyrkan was trying to hold back a laugh.

‘As expected, they aren’t skilled enough for me to remember them.’

Hyrkan took off his gloves as he thought this.



## Chapter 153 – Death Knight (3)

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7.

When facing the Skull Collector, the Users focused on its Special Skill.

In truth, that wasn't a bad thing to do. Still, if one is too focused on one thing, one's overall concentration regarding other factors would decrease. It was a matter of course.

This was why the Users that entered to face the Skull Collector in the Instance Dungeon rarely focused on the fact that the Skull Collector was holding its sword with its left hand.

For the Users that used a weapon, they mostly fought right-handed monsters. In the world of Warlord, the fight with a left-handed monsters wasn't too different from fighting a right-handed monsters, but there were some inevitable differences.

Queeng had revealed an opening as she couldn't adjust to the difference, and the Skull Collector took advantage of it. It wasn't just bad luck that had sent Queeng flying by the Skull Collector's sword. It was the result of her deficiency.

On the other hand, this realization made Hyrkan move.

‘I guess these guys aren't trying to fuck me over.’



Hyrkan didn't see the Skull Collector as the enemy. In the end, he planned on killing it by himself. Even if the 6 party members were wiped out, it wouldn't trouble Hyrkan at all. The act of taking down this monster wouldn't be too much of a work. The important part for Hyrkan was how he took down the monster. It had to look domineering and flashy!

That was more important to him.

This was why he had been worried that these 6 members would get in his way with impure intentions. However, any impure intentions can only be carried out if they were skilled.

From that point of view, Queeng's current status made Hyrkan relax.

'Thanks to them I'll be able to paint a prettier picture.'

When his worries disappeared, Hyrkan became satisfied with the situation.

Every audience loved a hero that saved others in dire straits with overwhelming power.

From that point of view, the 6 party members would become good actors for this scenario.

'Let's do this!'



After finishing his preparations, Hyrkan took off his glove. Then he held his breath as he started manipulating his watch. It was as if he was open the dial of a safe. He manipulated the dial of the watch.

Ddal-gahk!

Surprisingly, the watch came off.

[Item Slot Change Mode has been deactivated.]

The System Announcement immediately tickled his ears, and he grasped his wristwatch with his right hand.

The hand and arm holding the wristwatch was shaking. Hyrkan grasped the wristwatch as if he was about to crush it, and a black smoke started emanating from between his hand holding the wristwatch.

From the top to the bottom, the smoke started to elongate, and the black smoke became a thin line. Then the line started expanding as a space appeared in between the smoke. There was a dark world beyond the smoke, and a being was starting to reveal itself.

In the end, a Knight wearing an armor that was made from bones



of an unknown giant appeared from between this crack. Then a sturdy Skeleton Steed made out of thick bones started to appear slowly.

The Death Knight had appeared.

8.

The Skeleton Steed was enormous, and the Death Knight was riding atop it. The Death Knight's overpowering nature was ratched up from a 1 to a 10, and every factor that made up the Death Knight was overwhelming.

The first factor was its height! One would have to look up to be able to see eye to eye with the Death Knight. It was about 4 meters tall, and it had a massive build.

Moreover, the Skeleton Armor worn by it was splendid and imposing. It's appearance was so imposing that one had to question if the armor had any practical value. Then there was the black smoke continuously coming out from between the armor. It created a pool of smoke around the Death Knight, and it made any layman become wary. It created an overpowering and ominous atmosphere.

The imposing Knight was on top of the Skeleton Steed, and it was as imposing as its master. It was made entirely out of bone, yet black smoke came out of its snout. It refused to hide its enraged spirit against the Skull Collector.



The Skeleton Steed was made out of bones, but the bones were so thick that it didn't look skinny. Moreover, the thick bones made it look as if the Steed's body was filled in. This was the impression it gave off.

The Death Knight tapped against the Skeleton Horse's side to calm down the beast.

Of course, the Death Knight wasn't planning on becoming a gentleman here.

After calming down the Skeleton Steed, the Death Knight unsheathed the sword hanging on its left hip, and it raised the shield that had been hanging on its back. When the shield was removed, a red cape founds its freedom, and it billowed out behind it.

The Death Knight pointed its sword towards the battlefield.

[The Special Skill 'Leader' has been activated.]

When it pointed its sword, Skeletons started exiting out of the pool of black smoke around the Death Knight.

The Skeleton Knight showed itself first. Afterwards, 9 Skeleton Warriors and two Skeleton Magician charged out of the black pool.



This was the effect of the Special Skill called Leader.

When the Death Knight was summoned, it could automatically summon Skeletons including a knights, and it didn't consume any additional magical energy. At the same time, the Death Knight's Stats increased as the number of Skeleton Knight and Skeleton Warriors was summoned.

The biggest advantage was the fact that the Skeletons summoned by the Death Knight didn't count against how many the Necromancer could summon. In a flash, he would be able to summon 12 additional Skeletons. Of course, a single Special Skill wasn't the end of of splendor displayed by the Death Knight.

[The Special Skill 'Undying' has been activated.]

The Special Skill, Undying, was the pool of black smoke that formed when the Death Knight was summoned. The Skeletons within this pool wasn't able to die. It could receive critical damage, yet it will recover. Moreover, it didn't consume any magical energy to repair the Skeletons.

However, the Undying skill did consume the magical energy of the summoner to maintain itself.

[The Special Skill 'Fear' has been activated.]



The last Special Skill was Fear, and it was the Fear attack that was commonly used by Undead types or Spirit type monsters. It couldn't affect monsters that didn't feel fear, but all other monsters were struck with fear of death. It was a debuff skill that decreased the enemy's mobility speed by 20%..

Hyrkan had various Curse skills that stacked, and it could be used against Boss Monsters

[The Special Skill 'Chivalry' has been activated.]

[The Special Skill 'Commander' has been activated.]

Of course, the appearance of the Skeleton Knight activated its two Special Skills.

The result was overpowering in many aspects!

Chal-kahk!

Hyrkan once again put on his watch after seeing the result.

'Everything is great, but there's a problem.'

In truth, this was the biggest problem concerning the summon of a Death Knight. Unlike the other summons, the summon of a



Death Knight took several steps that consumed time. In a dire situation, he wouldn't be able to summon it.

Still, Hyrkan didn't hurry his actions. He slowly put on his wristwatch, and glove.

He looked full of bravado from afar, but Hyrkan's action looked dignified to those watching up close.

As in evidence, Queeng's party members gulped when they saw his actions.

Hyrkan looked elegant. It was if he was in a play as he put on his watch in a relaxed manner.

While he was putting his watch back on, the had already started.

The Death Knight pointed its sword towards the battlefield, and it kicked the Skeleton Steed hard on its belly. As if it had been waiting for it, the Skeleton Steed charged towards the battlefield.

Pah-baht, pah-baht!

It was running like the wind. The Skeleton Knight and Skeleton Warriors charged behind it.

The summoned familiars of the Skull Collector gathered as if they were trying to create a wall to intercept the enemies.



During that time, Hyrkan had thrown his Skeleton Fragment as if he was throwing chips at a casino. He lightly threw it in front of him.

Chwa-ahk!

The Skeleton Fragment was spread in a fan shape, and they started to take shape.

He had scattered 8 Skeleton Fragments, and all 8 of them weren't holding sword. The Skeleton was wearing robes, and they were holding staffs. They were all Skeleton Magicians.

After they formed, the Skeleton Magicians looked at the battlefield. They were waiting for an order, and Hyrkan gave that order.

Ddahk ddahk!

Hyrkan started the battle accompanying the short command.

9.

When the Death Knight appeared, the Skull Collector had thrown the 4th skull around its neck to the floor.

Koohng!



While the skull rolled across the floor, the Death Knight swung its sword towards the second familiar summoned by the Skull Collector. It swung its sword towards the Lizard Warrior, which was made out of dirt.

The Skull Collector's familiars were able to receive three powerful blows from magicians that had finished their 2nd Advancement. It wouldn't be easy to cut through a familiar with a single sword strike.

Shweeeek!

However, the Death Knight's single sword strike easily cut through the arm of the familiar.

Chul-puh-duhk!

When the familiar's severed arm fell to the floor, the Skeleton Steed trampled it. It was as if it was high stepping as the Skeleton Steed changed direction. It moved on its own as it was mindful of its owner's next strike. The Skeleton Steed repositioned itself, so the Death Knight could unleash its next blow.

Poohk!

As if to answer the Skeleton Steed's consideration, the Death Knight stabbed deep into the armless familiar of the Skull Collector.



Of course, everyone that was watching was taken aback.

‘How high is its attack?’

‘How is such a thing possible?’

Of course, everyone was shocked at the Death Knight’s fearsome attack capabilities.

Of course, it wasn’t as if all Death Knights could show such overwhelming firepower.

‘It better earn its keep. I could buy an apartment with the amount of money I spent on its setting.’

The Death Knight was holding the Deposed Prince’s Sword.

One of the strongest sword in existence in Warlord was being used by a Death Knight. Moreover, it was summoned by the strongest Necromancer Hyrkan. This was the result of these two factors meshing together.

Of course, it wasn’t effective to cut the body parts of an Undead type monsters. It didn’t cause much drop in its HP. The Undead monsters recovered pretty quickly from those wounds.

This was why one needed magic to do sure damage!



Magical spells were flying towards the battlefield.

It was 10 spells instead of one!

It was the result of Hyrkan summoning 8 Skeleton Magicians, and the Death Knight summoned 2 Skeleton Magicians.

Hwah-roo-roo!

The ten fireballs sizzled as it flew in an arc, and it didn't bother with differentiating between allies and enemies. The Skeleton Warriors lead by the Death Knight, and the Skull Collector's summoned familiars were swept up in the conflagration.

Kwahng, kwahng, puh-uhng, puh-uhng!

It was the sound created by the detonation of 10 magical spells. The accumulation of such sounds was very loud to the Users watching this sight. It made them furrow their eyebrows.

Pandemonium!

After the large explosion, the surrounding was roiling with flame. The group of Skeletons and the group controlled by the Skull Collector were all in a sorry state.

However, as time passed, the flame died down, and the Skeleton



Warriors and Knight regained their dignified appearance. The summoned familiars of the Skull Collector were barely able to keep themselves together. They were still in their sorry state.

Undying!

Unless the Death Knight was taken down, the Skill wouldn't allow the Skeleton Warriors and Knight to be destroyed.

“My god.”

The Priest, who was Queeng's peer, let out those words.

Of course, he wasn't a real priest. In reality, he was a software programmer, and he was an atheist. Whenever he had to use a Priest's Skill that had an incantation, he had to pray towards a deity. He always had an expression of repulsion every time he repeated the incantation.

However, at that moment, it was as if he had found a god inside the game. The sight in front of him looked like a completely different from the game he had been playing up until now.

Of course, he wasn't the only one that was gloomy.

The three Magicians was watching from behind Hyrkan, and they were more depressed than surprised.



‘What kind of magical fire power...’

‘How much damage dealing can he do?’

The continuous barrage of powerful magic from the 10 Skeleton Magicians was the root of their depression.

Of course, if one went simply by power of one’s magic, the Skeleton Magicians couldn’t compare to a real Magician no matter how many there were. The three magicians gathered here could, at the very least, show twice the damage shown by the 10 Skeleton Magicians.... In reality, they could actually deal three times the damage.

However, that was the problem.

The fact that they could make a comparison was a problem.

The Skeleton Magicians were only a portion of Hyrkan’s power, yet they could be compared to a magician that had finished one’s 2nd Advancement. This hurt the pride of the magicians!

Moreover, this was something intentionally done by Hyrkan.

‘Don’t you dare attack me. I’ll humiliate anyone that does in my video.’

Hyrkan was using this battle as a warning to anyone that was



planning on coming after him.

10.

The Skeleton Collector's summoned familiars hadn't fared well against the continuous magic bombardment by the Skeleton Magicians. Naturally, the battle turned into a one on one battle between the Skull Collector and the Death Knight.

This battle was different from any battle shown by Hyrkan's Skeleton up until now.

There was a horse involved.

Moreover, it wasn't an ordinary horse. The Skeleton Steed used its incredible charging and leaping abilities to its advantage. It even showed off an incredible trick by jumping over the Skull Collector.

These tricks weren't all for show.

When the Skeleton Steed jumped over it, the Skull Collector had no choice, but to turn its body.

Of course, the Death Knight used this to get through the Skull Collector's defense.

Poohk!



When the Skull Collector turned its body, the Death Knight stabbed at its shoulder. The Skeleton Steed let out a black smoke from its snout as it immediately charged towards a wall.

Kwah-ahng!

The Skull Collector's body hit the wall, and a large sound emanated from the blow. The Skull Collector was buried within the wall, and it was having a hard time moving.

Shweek, poo-oohk!

The Skull Collector tirelessly stabbed and slashed its sword towards the Death Knight.

It looked as if the Skull Collector had been driven into a corner.

Koohng! Koohng! Koohng!

While the Death Knight swung its sword, the Skeleton Steed unleashed a short, but powerful headbutts against the Skull Collector's body.

'It was as I saw in the Rich Lich videos. The Death Knight's AI capability is on a different level.'

Hyrkan knew better than anyone how scary a Death Knight was



in battle.

Hyrkan was the beneficiary of the Death Knight's battle capability, but it was powerful enough to give him goosebumps.

‘If I had to catch a monster of this caliber…….’

Of course, this wasn't free by any means.

‘It is very gluttonous in its consumption of magic.’

Hyrkan bit down on the Magic Recovery Candy hidden inside his mouth, and he carefully swallowed it.

The flow of the battle was overwhelmingly in Hyrkan's favor.

On the other hand, Hyrkan's magical energy was being consumed as if there was no tomorrow.

The fact that he had summoned 10 Skeleton Magicians signaled he wasn't planning on doing this battle through only his own magical energy.

The Skeletons recovered thanks to the Undying Skill of the Death Knight, and each recovery didn't cost him any magical energy. On the other hand, the magical consumption for maintaining the Undying was high.



Currently, if he released the power of Frost, he wouldn't be able to maintain his battle capability even if he used his recovery Items.

‘If I head across the Urugal mountain range..... I'll have to find Inoogas.’

However, Hyrkan didn't try to conserve his magical energy. Instead, he spread 10 more Skeleton Fragments on the floor.

After taking shape, the Skeleton Warriors were ready to charge into the battlefield. Queen and her party members were no longer surprised by this. They unconsciously let out a long sigh.

These were the expression Hyrkan wanted to evoke.

When the audiences saw his footage, their expressions would be identical to the ones on Queeng and her party.

This was why Hyrkan ate another Magic Recovery Candy hidden in his mouth. Even the 30 great guild Raid teams hesitated to use such expensive consumables, yet he had just eaten another one.

‘This really tastes nasty.’

For reference, the candy tasted like Chinese herbal medicine.

In many ways, this battle was bitter to his mouth.



# Chapter 154 – Find The Ruins (1)

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1.

When one entered Voodook's tunnel, nervousness and fear was usually intermixed with the thick fog. However, when one exits the Voodook's tunnel, it felt as if all those feelings were let go. This was why when Users exited the Voodook's tunnel, they looked as if couple screws were loose in their heads.

However, the six Users that had exited the Voodook's tunnel right now was different. There wasn't a single ounce of looseness in their expression or atmosphere.

Instead, it was quite apparent that a feeling of tension had replaced the looseness. One could feel the tension emanating from them.

Users were still hanging around the exit of the Voodook's tunnel for various reason, and they naturally they became curious when they saw the six Users.

‘What is up with their expressions?’

‘Six Users? Did a party member die?’

‘They entered with seven. They did above average if six survived. At the very least, two or three people usually die in there.’



‘Wait a moment? I don’t see any traces of a fight.’

If one wanted to survive in Warlord, one had to be quick on the uptake.

All of the Users here that had caught the Skull Collector and exited Voodook’s tunnel were experts at survival.

This was why they were suspicious of this new group that had exited. The quick-thinking Users were moving closer to satiate their suspicion.

However, their doubts were washed away when they saw the final figure that had appeared behind the tense group of 6 party members.

‘It’s the Hahoe Mask!’

The rumors that said the Hahoe Mask was attempting the Urugal mountain range hadn’t been spread throughout the world, but the news had spread to most of the Users present at the Urugal mountain range.

Moreover, the information was precise. If one wanted to find out about it, one could easily dig up when the Hahoe Mask had entered the Voodook’s tunnel.

This was why the Users in front of the exit of the Voodook’s tunnel could quickly make the calculations.



‘It took them only 30 minutes to pass through the Voodook’s Tunnel.’

‘My god. It would take a skilled party one hour to clear it, yet he cut the time in half.....’

‘He is monster amongst monsters.’

Voodook’s tunnel took about 1 hour to clear for a skilled party, yet he had come out in 30 minutes. He had cut the time in half. The Users were filled with admiration, jealousy and other emotions. These emotions were infused in their gazes as they headed towards the Hahoe Mask like arrows.

Of course, the Hahoe Mask wasn’t interested in the other 6 party members any more.

After observing his surrounding, Hahoe Mask’s gaze headed towards the top of the Urugal mountain range. The Hahoe Mask just stood there staring at the summit, so several Users followed his gaze to see what he was looking at.

‘Does he plan on catching the owner of the Urugal mountain range?’

‘Is he really going to do it by himself?’



At that moment, a different type of tension emanated from the Users.

The owner of the Urugal mountain range was the Blaze Slime Dragon.

There were a lot of nicknames attributed to the Blaze Slime Dragon by the Users. Amongst the nicknames, the one that stuck in the head of everyone was the Strongest Boss Monster.

Of course, this was a controversial topic.

Was the Frost Knight, which was defeated by the Hahoe Mask, more difficult? Or was the Blaze Slime Dragon, which was defeated by the Stormhunters guild, more difficult to take down? The participants of the Raids were excluded from the discussion as the debate started, and it was surprisingly fierce. People started exchanging numbers that would make an engineer's eyes spin to support their arguments. At the end of the debate, Blaze Slime Dragon was crowned as being the current Strongest Boss Monster.

Of course, the Blaze Slime Dragon was hunted down using the full might of the Stormhunters guild, so the Hahoe Mask was seen as the superior player. After the Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters guild, no Raid team had been successful in taking down the Frost Knight or the Blaze Slime Dragon.

In such a situation, what would happen if the Hahoe Mask took down the Blaze Slime Dragon? What would this implicate?



It would be indisputable. The Hahoe Mask would become the strongest existence in Warlord at this current stage.

He wouldn't just be equal to the 30 great guilds. He would be seen as being more powerful than the 30 great guilds.

‘Is he really going to attempt it?’

‘If it is the Hahoe Mask.... He'll be able to do it.’

In the end, it was a very foolhardy thing to do, but there was one person that nonchalantly did the impossible in Warlord. It was the Hahoe Mask.

Of course, Hyrkan wasn't going to fulfill their expectations.

Hyrkan wasn't looking at the summit of the Urugal mountain for this reason.

‘I'm glad I don't have to catch that bastard.’

Relief.

Currently, he was thankful for the fact that he could get past the Urugal mountain range without fighting the Blaze Slime Dragon.

If he had to kill it, he would have done it. The killing of the Blaze



Slime Dragon was a must if he wanted to get across the Urugal mountain. However, the Stormhunters guild had killed it, so they had already paved the way for him.

At the same time, the Stormhunters guild got all the benefit from being the first one to kill the Blaze Slime Dragon. Of course, Hykran would be able to make a lot of money from killing the Blaze slime Dragon by selling various parts. However, the Titles that came with killing it first....

He wouldn't be able to gain the Titles like the Dragon Slayer title. On the other hand, he would be able to gain a lot of money from the Raid footage. Then there was the Ingredients that allowed one to make level 200 Unique Items. There were still a lot of potential for profit here.

‘It isn't a bad idea to catch it, but there's no need to rush it.’

On the other hand, he would have to take a risk that was as large as the benefits he would gain.

This wasn't an ordinary risk. This was evident in the fact that 14 teams challenged the Blaze Slime Dragon when it respawned after 10 days. However, none had succeeded in killing the dragon.

These weren't just mediocre players. These were expert players that had easily gotten past the Skull Collector. Even these types of Users were having a hard time.



It would be the same for Hyrkan. No, in some ways, the Blaze Slime Dragon was a poor opponent for Hyrkan. Enemies like the Frost Knight was easier for Hyrkan.

Hyrkan was well aware of this fact.

‘There’s no point in hanging around the entrance.’

Urugal mountain range was a door.

A door had meaning only if one got past it. The safe itself wasn’t the price. It was meaningful only if one obtain what was across the other side of the safe’s door.

This was why Hyrkan started to walk.

When the Users saw him move, they immediately typed posts online.

[Hahoe Mask will challenge the Blaze Slime Dragon!]

A new rumor regarding Hyrkan formed at that moment.

2.

When the Stormhunter guild killed the Blaze Slime Dragon, any Users that passed the Voodook’s tunnel could cross the Urugal



mountain range.

The Users were able to reach the land across the Urugal mountain range, and they called this place the Black Continent. They attempted this location wanting to be a trailblazer. The Users were able to earn Items above level 200 here, and they wanted to find new monsters. Then there was the clues regarding the third Main Scenario Quest. They wanted to find a hunting ground that was the land of milk and honey.

These were the words spoke by these Users.

“Shit!”

“We don’t have to to complain. Run!”

“If this wasn’t the Black Continent, I would have stood my ground and fight!”

“Just run!”

The Black Continent was hell.

The lowest level monsters here were level 200. This land was crawling with level 200 and up monsters, and it was a bit too much for Users that had just reached level 200 not too long ago.

At the same time, the penalty given to Users from dying was



greatly increased in the Black Continent.

In Warlord, there were various penalties that were given to the Users, but the biggest penalty was being shut out from the game for 48 hours. This penalty was still present.

However, the Black Continent didn't have a Restart Point. It was the locations where the Users would respawn.

If one died here, one would immediately sent back to the other side of the Urugal mountain!

This was the result of failing here.

That wasn't the only problem. There weren't any place to rest here, and there were no markets where one could trade Items. Inevitably, one had to hunt monsters to get ingredients, and one had to make one's own consumable Items. Since no one knew which monsters gave ingredients to magical and health recovery consumables, it was impossible to produce the consumables.

Basically, this place was hell!

Of course, if one wanted to survive in hell, one had to become a devil.

The first group of Users that attempted to become devils were the Stormhunters guild. They were the one that had opened the door to this place.



“Currently, we’ve brought over a total of 157 members. We decided to rotate our playing time, so we divided everyone into 4 teams. I sent you the the roster for the 4 teams. I e-mailed it to you yesterday.”

When Shir saw the Hahoe Mask’s Frozen Kingdom movie, she made a bold decision. After finishing their 2nd Advancement, she brought 157 guild members to the Black Continent.

It hadn’t been an easy feat. There were a lot of tasks that needed to be finished for the Users over level 200. Moreover, the Stormhunters guild possessed a lot of programs on their live channel. If they wanted to broadcast a variety of contents, skilled Users had to be assigned to do a wide range of tasks.

She had brought most of them here, so for a while, the guild wouldn’t be able to produce meaningful contents. The Stormhunters would suffer huge loss in this process.

She had made the decision in spite of this. If they wanted to survive in the Black Continent, they needed a force of this size.

“I think we’ve located a Dungeon.”

The only thing left was to find a place where they could permanently reside.

In Warlord, one wasn’t safe just from building a wall or a wooden



fence. The most important part was to find a place where monsters didn't regenerate. This was why towns or castles were used as waypoints for Users.

However, they hadn't been able to find such a location in the Black Continent. There weren't any castles or towns.

This was why Hatch had come up with the idea of finding a Dungeon.

Unexpectedly, the Instance Dungeons possessed similar qualities as towns and castles. A good number of Instance Dungeons prevented Regeneration.

This was an unexpected consequence of a game mechanic they could take advantage of.

If there were invisible walls that were caging in a pack of wild beasts, one wouldn't be safe standing in front of them. However, the surrounding region would be the safest place to be.

“Since we found one, I hope it's a real Dungeon.”

Of course, the best thing for them was to find a real Dungeon instead of an Instance Dungeon. The real Dungeons were single use Dungeons.

If they could find a single use Dungeon, it would be the end of their search.



It was as the word implied. The single use Dungeon didn't regenerate monsters after it was cleared. It was the ultimate shelter.

Moreover, single use Dungeons were located in hard to find places. Even the monsters would have a hard time finding the location. Basically, it was a fortress blessed with natural barriers for defense.

If the Stormhunters guild wanted to overtake the Black Continent, they needed such a place.

Of course, there was someone else here that knew better than anyone as to the benefit of such a location.

3.

‘Where is it? Where is it?’

A User was busily moving his head from side to side as he looked at his surrounding. Hyrkan yelled out when he caught sight of a golden glint.

“There it is! Catch it!”

As if reacting to his words, the Skeleton Warriors in the surrounding started to move. Hyrkan also started running towards



this golden being.

‘You son of a bitch! I’ll catch you this time no matter what!’

It had been two days since he had climbed over the peak of the Urugal mountain range.

The world was waiting for Hyrkan to catch the Slime Dragon for the past two days, but Hyrkan was actually using his time to chase after the Golden Goblin.

‘If I don’t catch it this time, it’ll become a big headache.’

From Hyrkan’s memories, the Lost World....

He didn’t know who had named it the Black Continent, but he knew how he would be able to survive here.

Of course, the Golden Goblin being chased by Hyrkan was one of this methods.

Golden Goblin.

It was a level 200 monster, but it wasn’t worth anything. Its EXP was non-existent, and it wasn’t as if it dropped any good Ingredient Items. It was also very weak. A level 100 User could kill it.



Since it was weak, it hid in a shelter where monsters and Users couldn't find it.

The Golden Goblin's shelter was a Dungeon.

Moreover, a Dungeon at the Black Continent was a Ruin. He was sure of it.

The vestige of the Ruined Kingdom!

This was where the third Main Scenario would start.

One had to go into the Ruins of the Ruined Kingdom to find the clues. After obtaining the quest, one had find more clues to advance.

What kind of power did the Ruined Kingdom have? What had they fought, and what had caused its demise!

When one finds out about this truth, the Ruined Kingdom episode comes to an end.

This was why the Golden Goblin, which was being chased by Hyrkan, was important. The bastard was the starting point for the Ruined Kingdom episode.

‘Shit. Why the hell is it so fast?’



Of course, it wouldn't be caught easily. The Golden Goblin was unbelievably fast. Even the great Hyrkan would lose sight of it sometimes. If it was any other User, it would have already escaped.

Moreover, there was no point in just catching it.

One had to chase after it. He had to make it so that it ran towards its hideout. This was why it was driving Hyrkan nuts.

“Uh? Uh!”

He had summoned Skeletons to herd it. However, the Skeletons possessed AI for fighting monsters, so they were sometimes more trouble than help.

“Sto…….”

‘Don’t kill it!’

The Skeleton Warriors were able to chase it down and kill it. However, it didn't have much talent at herding it.

‘Shit!’

Before he could flick his finger to put it in defensive mode, one Skeleton Warrior got in the path of the Golden Goblin. It immediately cut the Golden Goblin into two.



“Ooh-ahhhhhhhh!”

This was how Hyrkan failed for the fourth time.

4.

Sinclair raised his head. He saw the Urugal mountain range, which was surrounded by a thick fog.

Sinclair turned his head. He saw the thousand Users, who were following his orders. They were the guild members of the Big Smiles guild.

Sinclair smiled.

‘This doesn’t feel too bad.’

The most recent events brushed by Sinclair’s thoughts.

The very first memory that came to mind was the fight with Sohank. When he caught Sohank in the Northland, he had become the Big Smiles’ biggest asset. He received the VIP treatment. Of course, he lost to the Hahoe Mask, but no one considered it a loss for Sinclair. No one spoke disparaging remarks towards Sinclair.

This was how the VIP treatment had started, and it was sweet. All the issues regarding the main Boss Monster Raids and the deployment of troops in the Big Smiles guild was now in his hands.



If one compared this to how a country was run, he had basically received control of the army.

Naturally, his reputation had increased. The Big Smiles guild had a massive fan following in China, and the guild had wanted someone like him to show up. The guild was busy portraying Sinclair as a hero. The shows that featured Sinclair always received a lot of views and interest.

Sinclair's control and the influence of his words deepened further. Moreover, with the help of Sinclair, Brooks was able to become the very first guild master of the Big Smiles. As promised, Apollo became a master of a sub-guild.

The product of his power could be seen behind Sinclair. Thousand Users would try to cross the Urugal mountain range. They would be fortunate if half of them were able to pass the Skull Collector. However, Sinclair was indifferent about it. He had risen to a position where he didn't need to worry about such things.

Moreover, his guild wasn't the only one doing this.

Big Smiles and V&V guild were allies now. A total of 5 guilds had decided to ally with each other, and they would attempt the crossing together.

Their goal was 10,000 Users!



They would send incredible amount of Users towards the Black Continent, and they'll for a kingdom over there with the 10,000 Users.

‘Hahoe Mask. No matter how much you struggle over there you’ll be by yourself. You won’t be able to face a kingdom without any help.’

Warlord was in disorder, and they were going to unify Warlord under their rule.

Sinclair put on a deep smile as he thought about the future.



## Chapter 155 – Find The Ruins (2)

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5.

[You've found a ruin.]

[You've acquired the Title 'Ruin Excavator'.]

[Please find the out-of-place Artifact within the Ruins.]

“Uh-whew.”

This was the System Announcement he had been impatiently waiting for. Instead of a joyous shout, Hyrkan's shoulders sagged as he let out a heavy sigh.

‘This bastard really....’

Hyrkan's gaze naturally turned towards the cause of his sigh. It immediately headed towards the corpse of the Golden Goblin., but his gaze didn't stop there. It continued to move to land on the Skeleton Warrior, which was standing over the corpse in an imposing manner.

The Skeleton Warrior didn't avoid its owner's gaze. It's imposing figure was reminiscent of a hunting dog standing over its prey. It was as if it was waiting for a compliment from its master. This was why Hyrkan swallowed his anger.



‘Yes. I’m the one that taught them, so it is my fault. They are blameless in this. I’m the one to blame for teaching them too well.’

Hyrkan abruptly felt such a feeling. He really felt the truth that he had grown terrifying monsters.

‘If monsters like my Skeletons came out as opponents..... Uh-whew. Just the thought of it gives me nightmare.’

He once again thanked the stars that his Skeletons weren’t an enemy he would have to face.

Of course, such sentiments didn’t last long. This wasn’t some significant milestone where he should get lost in sentimental feelings.

Hyrkan once again shook his head from side to side, and he shook off the unimportant feelings. Then he immediately looked forward. The eyes within the Hahoe Mask glazed over.

Some kind of a building was reflected in Hyrkan’s eyes.

He use the expression ‘some kind’, because it was hard to judge the shape of the building.

First, the building was half-buried in the ground. The part that stuck out from the ground was reminiscent of an earthworm. It was hard to discern the shape of the building, since it was covered in tree roots. If one glanced at it, one might not even notice it was a



building.

On the other hand, one could feel a mystical energy coming off of it even if it was faint.

The most eye-catching part of the building was the bricks that were giving off this mystical energy. Each brick was carved with various symbols. Instead of an engraving, it was embossed. The shapes stood out in relief, so the shapes were quite noticeable.

‘Is it a temple?’

His admiration ended there. The Skeleton Warrior, which had defeated the Golden Goblin, was returned to its Skeleton Fragment form. Then he entered the building. There was only one tunnel that lead inside. It was so small that he had mistaken it for a window, but he was able to squeeze his body into the space.

His shoulders were hunched and his head was lowered. He walked slowly like a turtle with his back hunched. Hyrkan was able to stretch out his back after ten steps. A deep darkness greeted Hyrkan when he straightened his back.

A bright light formed on top of Hyrkan’s head.

Underneath the bright light, he re-equipped the glove he had taken off to activate the light app on his wristwatch. Hyrkan quickly looked at his surrounding as he put on his glove.



‘It is a temple.’

The outer appearance of the building was too damaged to confirm his suspicion, but the basic components were present.

He had seen the bricks before he entered the building, and each of them were embossed with letters. Moreover, there were pictures instead of wall papers within the building. Everything was carefully crafted to imbue symbolic significance, and this was why Hyrkan thought this place was a temple.

‘I hope something decent comes out.’

He was hopeful, but Hyrkan didn’t think there were any treasures here in the temple that would make his eyes turn round.

The only thing he’ll be able to find here would be clues.

Toohk toohk!

Hyrkan scattered two Skeleton Fragments on the floor as he got ready to search for the clues.

The Skeleton Warriors quickly gained their forms, and their outer appearance was strikingly different from the standard Skeleton Warriors. It was less than 1 meter tall and they weren’t wearing armors made out of steel. They were wearing leather armor that made them look agile. Moreover, the weapons they held in their hand were suited for their size. The swords were



small enough to be called daggers. If a normal User held this weapon, it would look like a knife.

However, unlike their outer appearance, these Skeletons were terrifying.

These particular Skeleton Warriors were made from a level 180 monsters called Mini Ogre. Hyrkan had never summoned these Skeletons in public. He also didn't put them in his videos.

Weapon! This was a secret weapon that he had hidden away!

Hyrkan stationed the Skeletons near the entrance, and he started his search.

6.

“In the end, this is a game.”

Hatch spoke as he looked at the remnants.... He looked at the walls that was being propped up by pillars and something that couldn't be seen.

“Since it is a game, there is always a solution. If there isn't a solution, it is a bug instead of a game.”

The Stormhunters guild had found a ruin.



The Stormhunters guild had took the most important first step in the Ruined Kingdom episode.

Of course, this was a momentous first step for the Stormhunters guild, but they didn't stop to appreciate the moment.

“We've found the entrance! It is an entrance to the underground!”

When the entrance to the underground was found, they once again moved at a desperate pace.

Hatch immediately started giving orders. Hatch looked at Hahui, and he pointed his finger towards the newly discovered entrance.

They had already formed an expedition group for such a situation. Hahui was chosen to be the leader of the expedition group.

Hatch's gesture meant for Hahui to get ready. Hahui soon finished her preparations. When she moved near the newly discovered entrance, the members of the exploration team started to gather around her.

There were a total of 12 Users. Hatch spoke to Hahui in front of the team.

“Hahui.”



“Yeah.”

There was a weird atmosphere that emanated from their short conversation. The other members of the expedition team tilted their heads in confusion.

‘What the hell?’

‘Could it be?’

There were puzzled expressions on their faces.

However, these expressions didn’t last long.

“You stubbornly insisted on being the leader of the exploration team. I want you to do your work properly now that I made you the team leader.”

“What?”

“If there is a problem, I want you to turn back. I don’t want you to suddenly attack the enemy, because it annoys you.”

“Are you trying to lecture me right now?”

“Is isn’t a lecture. I’m giving you an advice.”



“What?”

The weird atmosphere disappeared in an instant. Hahui and Hatch spoke like their normal selves.

Everyone realized that they misread the strange atmosphere.

“You want to die?”

It was a phrase everyone heard the most from Hahui. Hatch suddenly stopped speaking at this point.

Usually, Hatch gave up on the conversation at this point, and he would gloss over the conversation.

However, it was different right now. If these were normal circumstances, he wouldn't have even given her the advice. The problem was the worst case scenario of suffering the Game Over. The normal Game Over penalty was steep, but it could be overcome.

However, it was different right now. If Hahui suffered a Game Over, it would take her 4 days to get back here assuming everything went smoothly.

Currently, the mess at the Voodook's tunnel meant it might take her 10 days to get back here instead of 4 days.



This was why Hatch gave another warning.

“Don’t die. Just don’t die. I don’t care what you do, but don’t die. Please don’t die. All right?”

Instead of answering Hatch’s words, Hahui smirked as she turned her back to him.

“The exploration team is going in!”

When Hahui’s exploration team moved, Hatch didn’t even have time for a break. He had to pick up another thread of conversation.

“Hatch.”

“Yes. Please speak.”

Shir immediately spoke to him.

“What do you think about the newly formed alliance?”

She immediately asked her question.

It was a sudden and out of the blue question. If one had just heard the question, it would be hard to discern the purpose behind the



question.

However, Hatch immediately figured out the intent and purpose behind the question. He gave his opinion as if he had been waiting for this question.

“There is the V&V, Big Smiles and Wul-gahng. It is inevitable that they’ll team up together. I’m not sure about this, but there is a high probability that these three guilds formed an alliance with the Sweepers guild and the Blossoms guild. Of course, this is my personal hunch, and it is only an educated guess.”

“Are these five guilds the only ones that joined forces?”

Hatch scratched his head.

“On the surface, there doesn’t seem to be any other movement. In the past great battle event, there were the guilds that sat out the event with the V&V guild. We’ll have to assume those guilds are sympathetic to the V&V guilds, and they’ll move in their favor if needed.”

“What do you think they are trying to do right now?”

“Their plan is obvious. They basically want to trample over everyone with superior numbers.”

Numerous conflicts and unrest occurred as the new stage called the Black Continent emerged.



The biggest and most recent mess was happening around Voodook's tunnel.

Several guilds of the 30 great guilds were sending a massive amount of members towards the Black Continent. Of course, there were so many people in queue that the wooden post was inadequate to post the list of the line.

There was a restriction on how many Users could go in at a fixed interval, and congestion inevitably occurred when high number of people gathered at this location. As the congestion grew, the discontent also grew.

“I believe the ruckus created in front of the Voodook's tunnel was planned.”

The mess was deliberately created to change the mind of the Users that planned on crossing the Urugal mountain range.

If they planned that far ahead, Hatch was able to sufficiently discern their motive.

“I'm sure of it. The five guilds have allied with each other, and they plan on monopolizing the Black Continent. This is obvious, but they'll start eliminating competitors once enough members cross over to the Black Continent.”

Solo Stage.



If they took advantage of the Voodook tunnel's special characteristic, it wasn't an impossible task.

Shir asked another question after she heard Hatch's explanation.

"Did these 5 guilds offer an alliance with us? Did they contact any of us?"

"No offers were given."

"Basically, we are one of their enemies."

"Yes. We might have to play it safe. It might get too scary to play this game."

Play it safe....

Shir let out a sneer instead of a bitter smile. Hatch had the same expression on his face.

They weren't really going to play it safe. The sneer on their faces indicated the opposite.

Hyrkan's ruin exploration didn't take too long. In the first place, he couldn't really call it an exploration. The ruin he had found wasn't that large. Excluding the space he had entered in the beginning, he had searched exactly two more locations before his



exploration came to an end.

After concluding his exploration, Hyrkan discovered the out-of-place artifact.

The out-of-place artifact he had found was a conch carved out of wood. It was pretty simple figuring out how to use the Item. Hyrkan put his ears against the opening of the Wooden Conch.

– We are requesting for help.

The Wooden Conch immediately let out a sound.

– Heard Fortress. The Dragon's army is coming towards the Heard Fortress.

The voice was filled with desperation.

– I'll say it again. The Heard Fortress is requesting for help. The Dragon's army is coming this way.

The voice within the Wooden Conch ended there. The sound was too disjointed, and it was hard to decipher the content unless one heard it again. However, Hyrkan didn't need to hear it again.

[Quest 'Remnant of the Heard Fortress' has started.]



There was a notification system that would be more informative than listening to the conch again.

When Hyrkan heard the System Announcement for the Quest, he immediately opened the Quest Window.

[Remnant of the Heard Fortress]

- Quest Rank : Rare
- Quest Level Range : 190
- Quest Content : Find the remnant of the Fortress mentioned by the out-of-place artifact.
- Quest Reward : None

‘The Quest Rank is Rare…….’

The Quest Content was light, but at the same time, it was familiar to Hyrkan.

‘I’m guessing the reward for this Quest will merely be a Transcendent Rank Ancient Power.’

This was why Hyrkan wasn’t too worried about the content of the Quest. It was within his expectation.

‘Heard Fortress…….’



The problem was the word Heard Fortress.

‘They changed the terminology.’

This was the first time Hyrkan had heard of the word.

The terminology that appeared in Warlord was controlled by the AI system, and it was able to make small changes as needed. Still, this knowledge wasn’t able to erase the bitter taste from Hyrkan’s mouth.

However, Hyrkan didn’t frown at the bitter taste. Instead, a small smile formed on his mouth.

7.

The Big Smiles guild had started it. The 5 guilds within the 30 great guilds tirelessly crossed the Urugal mountain range.

Of course, the process was very perilous. If twelve Users attempted it, around half would be forced back to the starting point.

The Skull Collector was trivial to the User wearing the Hahoe Mask, but it was a enemy that couldn’t be beaten without skill and luck for the others Users.



The Users that were able to make the arduous climb over the Urugal mountain range were basically treasures to the guilds.

Of course, the Big Smiles guild wanted to protect their treasures, so they started their activities with the safety of guild members in mind.

The hunting of monsters were done in large groups. It was excessive even when one considered the monsters' level and quality. Moreover, one had get permission to use any of the consumables. These were Items that they had drank like water in the past.

They basically gave up doing tasks Users normally had to do in the game. They gave up on exploration and leveling up.

In such a situation, the Big Smiles guild was able to find a ruin. Luck was on their side.

“Heard fortress. Doesn’t this seem like a really important Quest?”

The Big Smiles guild was able to learn an important clue about the Heard Fortress.

They were currently promoting safety over all else at that moment. It was inevitable, but a discussion arose regarding what they should do with this important clue.



“Isn’t it obvious? We have to do that Quest.”

“Isn’t it too dangerous? What if we all die? Do you realize how long the queue line is right now?”

“Even if it is dangerous, he have to take a risk of this size. We can’t always stay put as we suck on our thumbs.”

“The most important thing is safety. Our main directive is to survive.”

“Since we are insisting on safety above all else, the discontent amongst the guild members have reached the boiling point. They aren’t able to level up, and they can’t earn money through hunts. Basically, they are wasting time by connecting into the game right now. We have to appease them. We have to carry out this Quest.”

“I guess we have no choice. So who’ll carry it out? If we want to minimize the risk, should we sent our best team?”

“Should we send out our best team with the Killer at the core?”

“Wouldn’t that be more dangerous? I’m sure it’ll never happen, but if Sinclair somehow suffers a Game Over.... We don’t have any information regarding this place, and it is teeming with monsters over level 200.”

“Let’s form an exploration group. Let’s send an exploration group first.”



They had basically found a treasure map that lead to a very valuable treasure.

However, they had no idea what risks they would be taking on when they approached this valuable treasure. Currently, someone had to attach a gas tank on their body. Someone had to throw their body into the unknown to see if it was a fire pit or a water pit.

The User, who had to hold the gas tank, needed to have symbolic rank, but he had to be someone they wouldn't miss at all.

This was why they chose him.

“You are the commander in charge of the Heard Fortress Quest, Apollo. Do a good job.”

This was why Apollo became the commander in charge of exploring the Heard Fortress.



# Chapter 156 – Heard Fortress (1)

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1.

Treasure Hunt.

If Hyrkan wanted to give the shortest summary of the Ruined Kingdom episode, Hyrkan wouldn't hesitate to call it a treasure hunt.

All the tasks the Users had to do in the Ruined Kingdom episode fell into the purview of finding treasures.

There were treasures hidden. The Users had to find the clues to find these treasure. When one found the clues, one had to go to where the treasures were located at. Moreover, as one heads towards the location, monsters crowded the roads to interfere with the treasure hunt.

In this episode, Warlord used a method that a lot of games used. Warlord had added a setting that made this episode more like a traditional game.

The Ruined Kingdom was located in the Black Continent, and the User would gain a Quest in this land. When the User starts heading towards the destination, the game was set to increase the number of monsters on the road! It increased the overall number, and it also increased the regen speed. This in turn increased the number of monsters regenerating.



‘They didn’t change this setting at all.’

Hyrkan was able to confirm his suspicion when he saw the 3 Voodoo Lizardmen block his path. They had summoned thirty Zombie monsters.

‘It is exactly 1.5 times more.’

After he entered the Black Continent, he had faced numerous Voodoo Lizardmen in succession. During that period of time, most of the Voodoo Lizardmen operated on their own. At most, they worked as a duo. Moreover, each Voodoo Lizardmen were able to summon up to 7 Zombies.

However, three Voodoo Lizardmen had appeared right now, and each of them had summoned 10 Zombies each.

‘This game is so shitty sometimes.’

The content of the Ruined Kingdom was entirely different from the past, but the setting of the game was identical to the past. He let out a bitter laugh, and the sound of him grinding his teeth could be heard between his laugh.

However, he was able to put aside his feelings for the battle. Hyrkan was able to unhesitatingly immerse himself in battle. He did it in a very natural, proficient, and calm manner.



Ddahk ddahk!

Hyrkan had already summoned two Skeleton Knights, and he gave the order for battle. The Skeleton Knights were facing overwhelming number of foes, but they didn't hesitate. They threw their bodies towards the 30 Zombies.

Shweeeek!

The Skeleton Knights swung their swords. A sharp sound emanated as each sword stroke severed various parts of the Zombies.

Chul-puh-duhk!

The severed parts sloughed off like mud. Moreover, the stumps were quickly regenerating the missing part.

Ooh-uh-uh!

The Zombies shuffled forward as they let out a cry. It was hard to discern if they were crying or screaming.

The Voodoo Lizardmen kept shaking their staffs as they danced. It was as if they were cheering on the Zombies.

Ggi-ee! Ggi-ee!



Sometimes they even let out a weird cry as they looked at the sky.

Hyrkan threw Skeleton Fragments towards them.

Too-toohk!

The Skeleton Fragment fell near the feet of the Voodoo Lizardmen, and it quickly gained its form. He hadn't planned this out, but the Skeleton Warrior ironically had the shape of a Lizardman.

It was made from a level 180 Fanged Lizardman's bones as ingredients. These monsters were famous for their sharp canines.

The Fanged Lizardman had a unique battle style where it bit its enemy with its sharp canines.

When it took form, it immediately bit the Voodoo Lizardman in front of it.

Kieehhkh!

When the Voodoo Lizardman let out a scream in fright, the Zombies turned towards their owner.

Naturally, the Skeleton Knights were shown the backs of the Zombies.



‘Would you look at this?’

The Zombies had ignored the Skeleton Knights, and the Skeleton Knights started chopping off their heads as penalty for their action.

Puh-uhk!

The Skeleton Knights and Hyrkan were like walking guillotines. They unhesitatingly unleashed violence.

The most striking part was that Hyrkan’s sword strike didn’t make any sounds.

Poo-hwaht!

The Skeleton Knights let out a sound that could be easily discerned as a sound a sword makes.

Soo-oohk!

Hyrkan’s sword sounded like a shaving blade cutting facial hair.

There was no cry.

This meant the sword wasn’t the Crying Sword.



So what was identity of the sword in his hands?

It was the Deposed Prince's Sword!

Hyrkan was using the sword that he had previously equipped on the Death Knight.

It's effectiveness was a given.

Hyrkan moved forward as he severed the necks of the Zombies. When the Zombie's head fell to the ground, he crushed it as if he was stepping on rotten tomatoes.

Of course, the Zombies didn't just die from such an attack.

They were called Zombies, because they were Undead.

Hyrkan was just buying time.

He was buying time, so his Skeleton Warriors could take down the Voodoo Lizardmen without being harassed by the Zombies.

Ggieh! Ggieehhh!

While the owner of the Skeletons and the Skeleton Knights displayed their prowess, the Skeleton Warriors loyally performed their duty.. The sudden cry and scream from the Voodoo



Lizardmen was like a live update on how the Skeleton Warriors were faring against them.

The Skeleton Warriors finished their battle around the 3 minute mark. They answered their owner's trust with a huge gift.

[You level has increased.]

Level Up!

Hyrkan was now level 207. However, at that moment, he wasn't feeling happy about his Level Up. Regret was the first emotion he felt. He should have used up all his magical energy by summoning a Skeleton Warrior or the Golem before he leveled up.

'I'm overflowing with money, but I'm not able to spend it anywhere right now. Jeez.'

Currently, his account was overflowing with money, but he still had a lot of consumable in his possession. If he went out and bought more, it would be a waste of money. He was a little bit irritated that he still lived on a fiscally conservative budget. He couldn't bring himself to waste his Items on luxury items.

'In the past, I saw Rich Lich's interview. He said even if he had a lot of money, there wasn't much he wanted to spend it on. I wanted to punch him in the face when he said it. However, now I



am in his position.'

Hyrkan was definitely feeling the pressure being felt by the numerous Users, who had stepped onto the Black Continent.

Currently, the biggest problem tormenting the User on the Black Continent was the consumable Items. It was too hard to obtain them.

'The 30 great guilds are always the problem. This is especially true for Big Smiles and V&V... If I catch them, I'll....'

In the past, there had been several Users, who had taken advantage of the high market price. They acted as mules as they moved consumable Items through the Voodook's tunnel. This was why Users had been able to trade Items near the summit of the Urugal mountain. It had been expensive, but at the very least, they had the option to purchase these Items.

However, five guilds were trying to push through the Voodook's Tunnel right now, and they were causing an enormous amount of traffic. The possibility of trading with these enterprising Users were gone now.

He had been fully ready when he came here, but he never expected such a development. This was why hate was burning inside him towards the source of the traffic.

His loss didn't just end there.



Hyrkan let out a sigh as he dismantled the corpses of the Voodoo Lizardmen, which had been defeated by the Skeleton Warriors.

He dismantled the scaled corpse, and he found a Gem Ingredient from one of the melting body. He carefully put the Item into the pouch where he stored the recovery Items.

The Gem Ingredient that came out of the Voodoo Lizardman could be used to produce an Item. Basically, there were two types of Gem. One could be used to repair Items, and the other could be used to make recovery Items. If one chewed on an Ingredient that was used to make a recovery Item, one could still receive some recovery effect.

Of course, no User would use it in such a manner. It was like finding truffles in the mountain. It was akin to eating these truffles, because one was hungry.

‘I can’t believe I have to eat this.’

The Voodoo Lizardman’s Gem Ingredients were used to make level 200 Rare Rank defensive Items. Currently, a level 200 Rare Item with decent Option were trade for around 1000 gold.

He had to feed on such Item Ingredients to recover his magical energy.

‘……I have to quickly find the Heard Fortree. I have to progress in



the Quest to make that region into a foothold.'

This hurt him as much as losing to a monster.

'If not, I might die from an upset stomach. Eventhough I have a lot of money, I can't keep doing this with a sound mind.

Of course, this hardship wasn't indefinite.

He wasn't sure about it, but in his memories, he remembered the Fortress turned in a foothold when one finished the Quest. When the Heard Fortress becomes a foothold, the NPC would return. There would be cubicles where he'll be able to make Items.

It was similar to what had happened at the Cursed Castle.

This would also be the most important part of the Ruined Kingdom episode.

The first one to forge the road would have a hard time, but the benefit given to the person, who paved the first road was significant. It would be equal to the amount of hardship one faced.

In other words, he had to avoid being in 2nd place. The 2nd place User wouldn't get anything. The only thing waiting for the 2nd place User was a heartburn.

Hyrkan raised his head, and he put the Wooden Conch, which he



had found in the Ruin, to his ear.

– To the east. To the east....

Hyrkan turned his head towards the east when he heard the announcement from the Wooden Conch.

Koo-uh-uh-uh!

From beyond his eyesight, an unknown monster roared as it called out towards Hyrkan.

‘If I get a windfall of Items, I’ll spend my money in a crazy way.’

2.

They didn’t run into each other by luck. It was fate.

“It’s the Hahoe Mask!”

When the Big Smiles guild received the Heard Fortress Quest, they decided to proceed with the Quest in a safe manner. They created an exploration party, and Apollo was made the leader of this party.

Of course, Apollo wanted to look out for his own safety. So he picked out an advance group from within the exploration group,



and he sent them ahead.

He picked 7 Users for the advance group. There were 4 Strikers, 2 Priest and a Magician in the party. They started investigating the direction pointed out by the Wooden Conch they found at a Ruin.

When they heard the sound of battle between a User and a monster, they naturally headed towards the sound. Both the monsters and Users had to be investigated.

Currently, there weren't that many groups heading towards the Heard Fortress. The fact that they met Hyrkan was intended by god.

“Run!”

When the advance group discovered the Hahoe Mask, they immediately ran away. Hyrkan saw the group of people run away as soon as they saw him. When he felt their eyes on him, Hyrkan immediately gave up on the monster he had been fighting. He immediately became a pursuer.

‘Where are they from?’

Hyrkan didn't immediately know the identity of these Users.

However, they had run away as soon as they saw Hyrkan. He was sure they didn't hold any good intentions towards him.



Moreover, if they were able to get here, they weren't mediocre Users. If he let them go, they might aim their swords at him next time they met. They were potential enemies.

'The only way I'll live is to kill all these bastards.'

At that moment, Hyrkan came to a conclusion that he had to move in a desperate manner.

Currently, the 5 guilds including the V&V guild and Big Smiles guild were making an enormous mess at the Voodook's Tunnel. He was well aware of the fact that they were sending a massive amount of Users to the other side of the Urugal mountain range. This was a main topic of discussion on websites that catered to contents from Warlord.

He could guess what these 5 guilds were aiming for. They weren't sacrificing guild members, so the Users that came later would have an easier time.

They planned on showing the tyranny that could be conducted by the large guilds. It was a level of tyranny that was unimaginable to a normal User!

However, Hyrkan had faced the tyranny from the large guilds before. He received the punishment from facing up to such tyranny. He knew well the despair and dirty feeling that came with it.



His preparations were all done for this day.

‘I’m glad I invested a lot of money in this.’

This was something he had prepared for Users, who would run away from Hyrkan. It was his secret weapon. It was meant to be used to whittle away his enemies.

Hyrkan took out Skeleton Fragments from the Skeleton Fragment Pouch hanging off of his waist.

The four Skeleton Warriors that showed up were small in stature. It was the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors.

These weren’t the normal ones. These 4 were wearing level 170 Unique Rank defensive set. They wore the Forest Pursuer set.

The set Item could only be made by catching the Chameleon Jackal, and this monster was only accessible through Quests related to the Elven tribes. Currently, there were only a few amount of these sets in circulation. The Movement Speed option was greater than any other Unique rank set Items.

At one point, a single set was traded for 30 thousand gold. In recent days, if one wanted to obtain the set in a swift manner, one had to give up 10 thousand gold for it.



On top of it all, Mini Ogres were geniuses at pursuing foes. Their small bodies contained an explosive power, and even a seasoned Striker couldn't shake off their pursuit. No Users attempted a pursuit battle against the Mini Ogres.

The finishing touch was the Madness Helm.

These expensive pursuers were created solely for chasing down targets. The horned Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors were able to close the significant gap between its preys in an instant.

In the end, it was inevitable that the slow footed Priest became the sacrificial lamb.

The attack of Mini Ogre Skeleton Warrior wasn't aimed at the chest. It was inevitably aimed towards the knees and thighs. The Priest fell to the ground from a single blow.

“Ooh-ah-ah!”

The Priest's world spun round and round. He reflexively let out a scream. The scream ended only after the priest fell face down on the ground. The priest raised his head from the ground.

‘Aigo. My head....’

It seemed the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors had already moved past him. He couldn't see any of them in his surrounding.



‘Huh? I don’t see those shorties. Did they go somewhere else?’

The Priest looked around his surrounding, and he tried to get off from the ground.

Poo-oohk!

However, when he was trying to get up, a sword pierced through his back to come out of the his chest. He didn’t even need to turn around at look. He let out a shout of frustration when he saw the tip of the sword.

“Shit!”

The Priest’s shout didn’t last long. Hyrkan, who was the owner of the sword, tripped the Pirest. The Priest face once again planted itself on the ground. Hyrkan put a foot into the back of the Pirest, and he pulled out his sword.

Then he stabbed with his sword again.

“Huhk!”

A surprised filled word came out of the Priest’s mouth.

Of course, this sound wasn’t emitted, because he was in pain. There was no pain in this game. Basically, it felt as if someone was



poking him in the back with a finger. The level of pain he was experiencing shouldn't have made him afraid. If he would have surprised from being stabbed, he would have been surprised long before this.

So why was he surprised?

The reason....

“Isn't the damage it causes fantastic?”

The words came out of Hyrkan's mouth, and instead of answering, the Priest's body shook.

It had been a single light stab, yet the amount of HP he lost was beyond imagination. This was the reason why the Priest was terrified.

Dethroned Prince's Sword.

His reaction was befitting the strongest weapon in Warlord right now.

Poohk poohk!

Hyrkan asked a question as he kept stabbing the Priest with his weapon.



“Which guild are you affiliated with?”

The Priest didn't answer him. Instead of answering his question, the Priest was mumbling to himself.

“We encountered the Hahoe Mask, and I was caught.....”

Hyrkan stepped on the Priest's head. His mouth was pushed into the ground, so he couldn't speak.

Hyrkan didn't have any more business with this User, so he kept stabbing at the Priest's body. One of the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors, who had wandered a bit away came back to help Hyrkan stab at the Priest's body.

While he was taking care of the Priest, he felt the consumption of his magical energy.

‘They are worth their expensive price. They've already caught up.’

It was proof that the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors had started their battle with other Users.

After he made sure the Priest was dead, Hyrkan flipped over the body. The Priest was wearing a white priest robe, but it was soiled by the dirt now. When he looked at the left corner of the Priest's chest, Hyrkan saw a symbol.



It was a circle, and there were two dots and a line within it.

The fresh smile was the symbol of the Big Smiles guild!

‘Big Smiles.’

When Hyrkan confirmed the Priest’s guild affiliation, he turned his head away. He didn’t even bother taking his opponent’s watch.

Hyrkan only thought about how he’ll get rid of his enemies.

3.

– We encountered the Hahoe Mask, and I was caught…….

– We are fighting with the Hahoe Mask right now, and it seems we are going to die....

– I’m sorry. We were taken down by the Hahoe Mask.

When he received the report from this advance party, Apollo unconsciously let out a shout.

“It’s the Hahoe Mask again?”



Apollo unconsciously spat out those words, and the surprised Users around him turned to look at him at the same time. Apollo frowned when he felt their gazes. In many ways, he wasn't in a good mood.

‘Why is this bastard keep blocking my way?’

Apollo shut his mouth tight. He was irritated.

That was it. Apollo only got irritated. Unlike that time at the Frozen Land.... He didn't become drunk on his anger.

‘Shit.’

He didn't go rogue this time. He didn't give any orders. His temperament hadn't changed, but he was intelligent enough not to repeat a mistake.

“That fucking bastard.”

“What should we do? If we want to catch the Hahoe Mask...”

“Catch him? Do you think we can catch him just because we want to?”

Apollo shouted at his subordinate. He planned on immediately contacting Brooks. At this point, he needed the judgement and permission from the highest man in power. He couldn't do this on



his own.

At that moment...

‘No.’

Apollo suddenly had a thought.

He knew who held the highest authority and true power in the Big Smiles guild.

Apollo changed the person he was going to contact when he had this thought.

‘It’ll be faster if I contact Sinclair.’



# Chapter 157 – Heard Fortress (2)

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5.

– What should we do?

Apollo asked the question again, but the answer had already crystallized in Sinclair's head.

‘This is the golden opportunity to catch the Hahoe Mask.’

Hahoe Mask.

It wasn't an exaggeration to say the Hahoe Mask was the single most valuable being one could kill in Warlord.

‘No. I have to catch him no matter what.’

He had to catch the Hahoe Mask before he became a bigger variable. He had to kill the Hahoe Mask even if it was an unreasonable task.

However, he was given a chance to catch the Hahoe Mask, so there was no reason why he should turn down this opportunity.

There was only one problem.



Would the Big Smiles guild really be able to kill the Hahoe Mask?

‘Finally, luck is with me.’

They wouldn’t be able catch the Hahoe Mask.

The situation was completely different from the time when Sinclair went out to face the Hahoe Mask at the Cursed Castle. At the time, the idea of the Hahoe Mask winning against Sinclair was laughable. His Skeleton Warriors weren’t even an annoyance against Sinclair.

What about the current Hahoe Mask?

It was useless to compare levels.

The difference in Item Setting was too large. This was beyond the Hahoe Mask slightly exceeding Sinclair in terms of Item Setting. Currently, no User could come close to the Item Setting possessed by the Hahoe Mask. He had the Deposed Prince’s Sword, Argardo’s Armor, Secret Society’s Token, Corrupted Arbiter’s Ring, Corrupted Destroyer’s Necklace... He was pretty much like an end-game boss.

What about the Skeletons possessed by the Hahoe Mask?

A Hahoe Mask fan broke down a battle footage released by the Hahoe Mask. The gear worn by a Skeleton Warrior on average was worth 23,300 gold.



However, this was an estimate from the time when he faced the Frost Knight. The Hahoe Mask hadn't released the footage yet, but there was a rumor going around that he had summoned a Death Knight when facing the Skull Collector. The rumor was from a User that had passed through the Voodoo's Tunnel. The Hahoe Mask was much stronger than the time he faced the Frost Knight.

What would happen if the Big Smiles guild tried to hunt him down? If this was a regular hunting ground, they would have a chance of winning. However, this was the Black Continent. If one moved a large group of Users, it would just lead to a war of attrition with the Monsters.

Even with all these factors against them, Sinclair thought they would be able to catch the Hahoe Mask if luck was with them.

The reason being...

‘It is fortunate that the Clover Unit is nearby.’

The Poker team had pulled V&V guild into the ranks of the top guilds. One of the Poker team called the Clover unit was heading toward the Heard Fortress.

‘Apollo's exploration team and the Clover unit can merge. There would be a total of 40 Users. Apollo's team can be used as bait, then the Clover unit can step forward...’



He trusted the Clover team. Sinclair's backers was the Hands guild, and they had put in a considerable effort in making the Clover unit.

At that moment, Sinclair thought about the final worry he had.

'The Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters guild must not meet. We have to prevent the two of them from teaming up at all cost.'

He worried about the worst possible outcome. After he worried about the possibility, Sinclair finally opened his mouth.

"Apollo."

– Yes.

Sinclair's answer was late, since he had thought over his options. However, Apollo didn't act impatient with Sinclair.

"Let's kill him. Let's use this opportunity to kill him."

– The Hahoe Mask?

Apollo seemed slightly surprised, so Sinclair immediately forged ahead with his words.

"It'll be possible if you cooperate with one of the Poker team. The



V&V guild's Poker team is nearby you.”

– I'll do as you say.

His reaction couldn't be seen, but Apollo had a big smile on his face at Sinclair's answer. The flesh on his face bunched up together as he smiled.

Hyrkan's secret weapons were beyond his expectation. They were great. The Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors chased down the swift runaway Users, and they tormented the Users that were caught.

When their ankles were caught by the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors, the Hahoe Mask appeared, and the User would give up on running away.

“Fight me! Fuck. Let's see who'll win!”

These Users had played the game of Warlord for several years, and they had experienced the ups and downs of this game. The Users struggled fiercely against Hyrkan, and they showed a fiery spirit.

Of course, their fiery spirit was useless against Hyrkan's summoned Skeleton Warriors and Knights. It was a pointless struggle.

He was a frightening predator.



This was the moment when a new mask appeared behind Hyrkan's current mask.

“Whoa.”

‘As expected of the 30 great guilds, they use expensive Items.’

Of course, it didn't take long for this frightening predator to morph into a hyena that roamed around to find rotten meat. Hyrkan searched the bodies of the dead Users.

In Warlord, consumable Items had to be carried around on one's body. Of course, when a User suffered a Game Over, the consumable Items on one's body fell to the floor. Even when one revived 48 hours later, the consumable Items weren't restored to the User. Only the stored Items inside the wristwatch was retained.

Normally, the consumable Items were treated as trash Items in PK. Everyone focused on the wristwatches. Hyrkan also followed this behavior.

However, it was a different story on the Black Continent.

‘These hunts feels different.’

Instead of the wristwatches, Hyrkan was taking the consumable



Items first. He smiled when he noticed this.

Of course, Hyrkan also took the wristwatches.

Puhk, puhk!

The sword he held came down on the wrists of the Users, and he took their wristwatches.

‘The Deposed Prince’s Sword is awesome. It is great for dicing.’

Deposed Prince’s Sword.... It was a masterpiece forged by the Blacksmith Olf. It was given to heroes, who had defeated the Immoral Prince. It was meant to be used to save the world. If Blacksmith Olf saw his sword being praised for being a good butcher’s knife, Hyrkan’s stomach would be struck repeatedly by ‘Olf’s Hammer.’

Of course, Blacksmith Olf wasn’t here now, so he didn’t have to worry about such a scenario.

‘Ok.’

Hyrkan had a smile as he looked at his full pouch. It was as if a hamster had stuffed its food into its cheek. This was one of the happiest smiles he had put on in the Black Continent.

However, the smile didn’t last long.



Koo-uh-uh!

When the Users disappeared, the monsters showed up to torment Hyrkan.

The role of pursuer and the pursued flipped constantly in this hunting ground. However, Hyrkan didn't plan on bypassing these monsters.

Of course, the riled up monsters drew aggro from the only User left alive!

Hyrkan smiled as he saw the monsters run towards him without reserve.

‘This really is a fucked up game.’

6.

Ahn-jaehyun's eyes were open as he lay on his worn mattress. He kept staring at the old wallpaper on his ceiling.

‘Ah, I want to move to a different place.’

Recently, this phrase was never far from his mouth. After getting up, Ahn-jaehyun put on his cheap horn rimmed glasses. He reflexively turned on the Tablet PC that had been placed next to



his glasses. However, it felt as if his Tablet PC was more sluggish than normal. He might be mistaken, but Ahn-jaehyun's expression turned sullen.

In the end, a sigh came out from his mouth.

‘I can’t believe I’ve reached this point.’

Money.

The thing he had wanted the most was now in plenty supply. It was beyond plenty. He was overflowing with money.

However, he didn’t have the free time to spend his money. His days were scheduled into blocks, and he had to be constantly inside the game. He didn’t have the time to eat out or even order food.

In recent days, he was nervous most of the time as he went through his busy schedule. He had built up his tower through hard work, yet he was afraid a momentary mistake would make it the Leaning Tower of Pisa. He had to keep his schedule.

Maybe that was the reason?

Ahn-jaehyun was getting new influx of money from his paid videos and other miscellaneous earnings, yet it didn’t feel like his own money.



Maybe, if he was able to recklessly spend his money on the Items within the game, he might have felt differently. However, he hadn't done that.

This was why he unconsciously turned away from the numbers that had excited him to no end before. He started searching for Warlord-related articles instead of looking at his his bank account.

The search words mainly focused on 5 guilds including V&V and Big Smiles guild.

His search turned out a lot of information.

The V&V, Big Smiles, Sweepers, Wul-gwahng and Blossoms guild were explicitly showing their desire to monopolize the Black Continent. The Black Continent was the stage of the Ruined Kingdom episode, so this became a hot issue. A hot issue always created a lot of content online.

As he went through the related articles, Ahn-jaehyun clicked his tongue.

‘Well, they obtained several ace cards they could use to attempt the monopoly. This could bring change to the final outcome.’

The topic that brought the most bitterness to Ahn-jaehyun's mouth was the accomplishments of the Poker team. They were the V&V guild's strongest force.



He read the articles related to the Poker team, and he watched the battle footage they had released in the Black Continent. He let out a bitter sneer.

‘I thought these bastards planned on breaking all the record times for the Raids.....’

Until the Stormhunters guild caught the Blaze Slime Dragon, the Poker team was still systematically attacking the record time for the Raids. They centered their core contents around this concepts.

However, they were suddenly operating out of the Black Continent now.

In truth, this should be taken lightly by Ahn-jaehyun.

‘It is quite impressive.’

The 30 great guilds were able to move massive amount of money through the live channels. This wasn’t all their money. There were backers and investors. There were a lot of other people’s money sunk into their venture. Since the money didn’t belong to them, they couldn’t easily change directions.

However, the V&V guild had executed this change too easily. This was something he should be worried about.

In the end, the V&V guild would be on the opposite side of Ahn-jaehyun. They would never help him.



Recently, the Stormhunters guild was being quiet, but they had stepped onto the Black Continent first. They could suddenly become a variable that could torment Ahn-jaehyun in the future.

Ahn-jaehyun took off his glasses, and he covered his face with his two hands.

There was only one solution to this problem.

‘If they catch my tail, it is the end of me.’

He had to change this competition into a race.

He had to change it into a game where the person in first place was the victor. It didn’t matter if there were several hundred or several thousand Users behind him. He had to make it so that there would be only one User that could reach first place.

After taking away his hands from his face, Ahn-jaehyun put on his glasses as he got up from his seat. Ahn-jaehyun went to a sink nearby. The kitchen sink was worn and rusted. However, there was a high quality coffee machine atop the sink. It gave off an elegant atmosphere.

He had recently purchased this pod coffee machine.

He had spent a good amount of money to purchase this one. This



machine brought home the fact that he had made a lot of money recently.

Moreover, this machine was worth its cost. He placed his stained coffee cup on the machine as he put in the classy-looking pod. Unlike his old acidic coffee, the new coffee was fragrant.

Still, Ahn-jaehyun dropped the oft used grape flavored candies into the coffee.

Afterwards, he brought the coffee to his mouth, and he nodded his head.

“Mmm. It’s good.”

‘I feel like a New Yorker. I’m glad I bought it.’

7.

Ravine.

There were enormous cliffs facing each other, and there was a forest in front of the ravine. Large stone pillars arose from between the forest, and there were remains of large buildings besides the pillars. Moreover, one could faintly see that a fortress had blocked the entry into the ravine in the past.

Hyrkan had saw this from far away, and he let out a big sigh.



As Hyrkan started breathing normally again, one could see 19 Skeleton Warriors and two Skeleton Knights lined up behind him. They were in their combat-ready stance. One could already see traces of battle on them, and it meant that a battle had been performed not too long ago. Moreover, it was a sign that more battles was in the near future.

This was why Hyrkan treasured this time where he would be able to take a brief breather.

‘As expected, things have change from what I know.’

Hyrkan searched through his memories, and he thought about the first base that had been formed in the Black Continent.

Before he came to the past, the first base hadn’t been located at a ravine. It had centered around a lake with black water.

The name wasn’t the only thing that had changed. Basically, the stage itself had changed.

He had held out hope that only the name had changed. Now he decisively quashed such sentiments.

‘Still, it feels as if I have seen this before…….’

At that moment, he was looking at a stage that was different



from what he remembered, but he kept having a sense of déjà vu. He tilted his head in confusion.

‘An enormous ravine…… Which location had a ravine as its stage?’

However, he wasn’t given time to ruminate over his worries. His break didn’t last long either.

Hyrkan turned to look over his back.

Koo-uh-uh!

It was as if the monsters were letting out a roar for courtesy’s sake. The sound coaxed Hyrkan to move forward.

‘I have to avoid being in 2nd place.’

He had to avoid being in 2nd place at all cost. Before he could fully catch his breath, Hyrkan headed towards the Ruin of the Heard Fortress.

8.

[You’ve entered the Ruins of the Heard Fortress.]

[You’ve gained the Title ‘Heard Fortress Excavator.’]



[You've gained the Title 'Explorer of the Ruined Kingdom.']  
[You've gained the Title 'First Discoverer.']

The Heard Fortress was in a terrible state. However, Hyrkan was given an awe-inspiring gift for being the first visitor.

Hyrkan was finally able to smile when he received the Titles.

'I avoided being in 2nd place.'

He had worried about the possibility of other Users coming here first. His worry melted away.

Hyrkan immediately checked the fruits of his labor.

[Heard Fortress Excavator]  
Title Effect : All Stats +15

[Explorer of the Ruined Kingdom]  
Title Effect : Magic Power +20

[First Discoverer]  
Title Effect : Stamina +40, Magic Power +40



The Title Options were fantastic. Hyrkan glanced at his Stats Window after the Titles Effects were applied.

However, he didn't sentimentalize over it. After he checked the rough estimates of his Stats, he immediately put the Wooden Conch to his ears. This wasn't the end. He wanted the real treasure. This wasn't the true reward given to the 1st place winner.

– Find our flag. Our flag.....

The Wooden Conch once again pointed out the next path to Hyrkan. Hyrkan turned his head to look at his surrounding.

He searched his surrounding with the eyes of a hawk. Suddenly, Hyrkan's eyes went out of focus for a little bit. He had been earnestly searching around his surrounding, but now his head was tilted in puzzlement.

‘I'm pretty sure I've seen this somewhere.’

Deja vu.

Something was bothering Hyrkan once again.

‘I'm pretty sure I've seen this place somewhere. I'm sure I saw it in a footage regarding the Ruined Kingdom Episode.’

However, Hyrkan's questions disappeared when he saw a mound



made out of rocks. The mound was as big as a farmhouse. Moreover, there was flag sticking out at the top.... The flag itself was decayed, and only the pole remained. Hyrkan rejoiced when he saw it. There was no sense of deja vu when he saw it.

When he was near the stone grave, Hyrkan once again placed the Wooden Conch to his ears. However, the Wooden Conch didn't emit any sound. It basically meant the Wooden Conch had served its purpose. He threw the Wooden Conch over his shoulder.

Afterwards, Hyrkan unsheathed the sword on his waist to unearth the stone grave. His Strength Stat was so high that most rocks flew away like pebbles.

Choo-roong, choo-roong!

When he came across a large boulder, he used the Crying Sword to break it apart.

It was a grave meant for someone or something. However, Hyrkan didn't hesitate in becoming a grave robber.

Hyrkan continued to dig through the stone grave, and he finally found a black box that was hidden below the stone grave.

'It is the Black Treasure Box. As expected, it is a Transcendent Rank.'

Hyrkan used his sword to open the Black Treasure Box. It was as



if the Items within the box had escaped the ravages of time. He saw three intact scrolls.

This was the ultimate reward given to the first person to arrive here.

Hyrkan picked up one of the Scrolls, and he untied the red string.

[Will you release the Ancient Power?]

Hyrkan immediately made his choice when he heard the System Announcement. Hyrkan didn't hesitate.

‘Of course, I…….’

It happened at that moment.

[The sleeping souls within the Heard Fortress is waking up.]

The new System Announcement made Hyrkan pay sharp attention to his surrounding. He couldn't feel any big disturbance. If one watched the movie, Indiana Jones, didn't Harrison Ford face immediate danger when he found the treasure he had been searching for?

This was to be expected.



This was a natural order of events. He had to do this if he wanted to make the Heard Fortress into a base within the Black Continent. He had to face the Boss Monster that was protecting the Ruins of the Heard Fortress.

‘Whoever it is, come at me!’

The System was polite in giving the identity of Hyrkan’s enemy.

[Anugas is awakening. He is a giant that eats the sleeping souls within the Heard Fortress.]

[The Quest ‘Recapture the Heard Fortress!’ has started.]

“Huh?”

When he heard the announcement, Hyrkan’s mind blanked out. From a short distance away, there was an earthquake, and the ground started to split open. A one-eyed giant with four arms appeared.

“Fuck!”

Hyrkan finally knew where this place was.

‘This is the Bizult’s Ravine! This is Bizult’s Ravine where the Anugas appears!’



Hyrkan finally realized the reason behind the sense of deja vu he had felt.

9.

‘Hahoe Mask. That asshole is really fast.’

Apollo’s mission was changed from exploration of the Heard Fortress to finding the Hahoe Mask. Every time he received a report Apollo shook his head.

This stage was overflowing with monsters, yet the Hahoe Mask was showing incredible hunting speed. Moreover, his swift hunting speed allowed him to travel at a rapid pace. In truth, there was a small voice inside his heart that had acknowledged this premise. The premise being it was impossible to chase down the Hahoe Mask....

At that moment....

The fact that a small portion of his heart had already accepted this as fact made him feel rage and irritation. It was ripping his insides apart.

At that moment, he received another report.

– We’ve found the Hahoe Mask!



The hunting party that was tracking the Hahoe Mask alerted Apollo. The Hahoe Mask had just appeared. Apollo asked in delight.

“Where is he?”

– The location.... Anyways, the Hahoe Mask just changed direction from his original path.

“So what?”

– It seems he is running away from something.

“Is he being chased by a monster?”

– I don’t see any monsters chasing after him.

When Apollo heard those words, he gave his orders.

“Do everything you can to block him! Even if you have to put your life on the line, don’t let him run away! You have impede his progress no matter what!”

– Yes.

His subordinate gave an immediate answer, yet Apollo hadn’t



heard his answer. He had changed the Voice Talk channel before he heard the answer.

“Clover unit. Clover unit. This is Big Smiles. We’ve found the Hahoe Mask. We’ll buy you some time. He is located at....”

– This is the Clover unit. We’ll be moving towards the location you mentioned.

The conversation was short. When it ended, Apollo had a triumphant smile on his face.

‘This will be your funeral, Hahoe Mask.’



# Chapter 158 – Catch Or Be Caught (1)

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1.

The forest didn't even have a road. It was filled with beautiful trees and house-sized stone pillars randomly located within the forest. It was incredible to see Hyrkan run through such obstacles. At times, he dodged the tree trunks like a snake, and he used unexpected boulders as launching pads. He was like a squirrel.

‘Shit!’

He was awesome at running away. However, no one in this world like or wanted to run away.

In such an uncertain situation, he held the Deposed Prince's Sword with his right hand as he stayed ready for a battle that might occur at any time. He had tucked the box with the scrolls containing the Ancient Power on his left side. He basically looked like a thief running away. Of course, he didn't have any time to relax.

Hyrkan was running full tilt as his expression expressed his restlessness, strain and urgency.

Something appeared suddenly in front of him.

Hwah-roo-roo-roo!



An enormous wall of fire suddenly appeared in front of him. Hyrkan reflexively stopped in front of the fire.

‘I’m in a hurry. Which bastard did this?’

Of course, Hyrkan knew that the wall of fire had been created by a magician. This was why he had stopped running.

It was around 10 meter high, and it was 1 meter in width. It was too big to jump over it, but Hyrkan’s superior Item Setting meant that the Fire Wall couldn’t do much harm to him.

If he wanted to, he could just charge through it. However, this meant the magician, who had used the magical spell, knew this fact too. Basically, this fire wasn’t meant to damage Hyrkan.

‘Fuck....’

It was a diversion.

If he recklessly hurtled through the Fire Wall like an acrobat, a critical blow would come from the other side.

Hyrkan had suffered this scenario before, so he was well aware of this tactic. Moreover, even if there was nothing across the Fire Wall, he had no choice, but to stop.

Hyrkan turned to look behind him. Unlike the chaotic situation



in front of him, it was very calm and quiet behind him. The only thing he could see was his own tracks.

However, Hyrkan could guarantee it.

‘If Anugas follows the attack pattern from before, it unerringly follows its opponent, and its pursuit can’t be shaken unless it locks onto another opponent. It is classified as an illusion type monster, so it wouldn’t be strange if it appeared suddenly.’

He had a pursuer except one couldn’t see this pursuer with one’s eyes.

This was why Hyrkan considered the current development to be somewhat favorable for him.

Currently, a Wall of Fire had been placed in front of him, and this meant that there was at least one other User nearby.

He had no reason to waste his energy by striking up a conversation. Hyrkan tossed the box he had been carrying nearby. It held the Ancient Power. At this point in the game, it was worth a lot, but he couldn’t fight, while carrying it by his side. He wouldn’t risk his life for the sake of protecting the Ancient Power.

When Hyrkan’s left hand was freed, he stole a handful of flame from the barrier in front of him.

The spark of fire took hold on Hyrkan’s glove, and the spark



didn't fizzle out. Instead, it started burning larger, and the flames surged forward. In the end, a giant made out of fire took shape.

The Fire Golem appeared!

When the Fire Golem appeared, it immediately absorbed the flame blocking its master's path. Hyrkan looked at the road in front of him. As expected, there was a trap that was meant to catch Hyrkan.

Ggoo-uh-uh!

There were two enormous bears made out of fire like the Fire Golem on the road, and they started running toward Hyrkan.

However, Hyrkan didn't step forward. The Fire Golem had located its enemies first, and it moved to protect its master.

The three Fire Creatures, which had been formed beforehand, started to fight each other. It was a messy fight between large monsters, and while the battle was commencing, Hyrkan scattered two Skeleton Warriors.

The Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors took shape!

Hyrkan had already confirmed that these Skeletons were genius trackers, so he gave the order.



Ddahk, ddahk!

After he flicked his fingers, Hyrkan turned to look towards his back again.

‘It feels as if I’m fighting with a bomb strapped to my neck.’

It was a desperately dangerous situation.

He had fallen into a danger that he hadn’t been able to predict.

‘Yes. It’s always like this for me. When things start to go my way, a bloody awful day is around the corner.’

On the other hand, he now felt as if he was playing Warlord.

2.

When facing the Hahoe Mask, one had to avoid close combat at all cost. Even though Hyrkan was a Necromancer, he had higher Strength Stat than most Strikers. He had put all his Level Up bonus into Strength, and he had managed to equip himself with the best Item setting in Warlord. On top of all of that, he had numerous titles that boosted his Stats further.

Hyrkan’s Items were too advantageous in a close combat.



Crying Sword.

Currently, there was no weapon in existence that could destroy weapons and defensive gears as well as the Crying Sword. In terms of destroying Items, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the Crying Sword was better than the Deposed Prince's Sword.

Depose Prince's Sword.

It was unequivocally the strongest Item in existence in Warlord right now.

The Dark Spot set was similarly a defensive gear that boasted the highest defense.

This resulted in Hyrkan being a monster in terms of close combat ability.

So what was Hyrkan's weakness?

It was the powerful AOE magic. Of course, Hyrkan had incredible defense against magic, and he had high resistance to elemental magic. It wasn't easy to give critical damage by using a powerful AOE magic.

However, magic was still considered to be Hyrkan's weakness even with a lot of things going against it. The reason being it was the surest way to keep his Skeletons underlings, which was Hyrkan's greatest power, in check. Hyrkan's Skeleton underlings



were also equipped with incredible Items, but they couldn't be compared to Hyrkan.

Another deciding factor was the fact that Hyrkan's magical energy consumption increased as the number of Skeleton Warriors were increased.

It was true.

Magic was Hyrkan's achilles heel, and if one wanted to kill Hyrkan, one had to aim for this weakness.

“Keep using your magic! You have to put him on his heel! Use your magic, so he can't take out his Skeletons!”

Apollo was using that strategy.

Of course, he wasn't carrying out the plan. From the beginning, Apollo stood far away from the battlefield. He did as he wanted, and he continuously bombarded his subordinates with orders. His subordinates resented him. Apollo never contributed in a battle, yet he had the potential to be a detriment.

‘That son of a bitch. He should do it himself!’

‘Does he think using magic is easy? Everyone thinks Tankers are the only ones that suffer.’



Of course, the recipients of Apollo's words didn't feel good hearing after hearing such words.

They were navigating through the battlefield as they chased after the Hahoe Mask. It was hard to use magic in such conditions, yet Apollo kept giving orders that sounded like threats. It was unspeakably humiliating.

However, their humiliation came to an end.

– We've been had!

Something terrible occurred not long after the battle had started. Hahoe Mask used the trajectory of the magical spells to track down and kill the magicians. A Striker and a Tanker was placed nearby a magician as protection. In truth, the only thing they could do was for the Strikers to runaway with the Magicians, while the Tankers stalled the Hahoe Mask. This was the only way.

If they failed to do that, they would let out the sad message like 'We've been had!' again.

In the end, two magicians from the group of 5 was cut down.

Apollo smiled when he received the report.

'He finally bit the bait!'



3.

With a single strike, he cut through the robe and body of the third magician. The Striker, who had been guarding the magician, executed a sword strike. It was a top to bottom swing. The Striker's sword fell vertically like lightning, and it was as if the Striker wanted to destroy Hyrkan's sword.

Kah-ahng!

Of course, the sound of harsh steel exploded forth.

Ggee-reek, ggee-reek!

The two swords pushed against each other as a goosebump inducing screech was emitted.

‘This bastard…….’

Of course, Hyrkan immediately realized the User in front of him wasn't normal.

It wasn't something he had to realize, since it was obvious. How many Users could fight on even ground with a sword with Hyrkan without using any Skills? Hyrkan immediately eyed his opponent's Item Setting.

‘He has the Great Battle Hero's sword. Is that the Golden



Centipede set?’

The Great Battle Hero’s sword wasn’t as good as the Deposed Prince’s Sword, but it was good enough to be call a top tier weapon.

Moreover, the Golden Centipede set was famous. One could get this Unique set Item when one caught a level 180 Boss Monster called the Golden Centipede. It had low defense, but amongst the level 180 Items, it was best for maximizing attack. This was why it was categorized as an Extreme Attack Set.

Of course, it was expensive. Even if one had money, it was hard to acquire. The Golden Centipede was only found recently, and Users, who weren’t interested in Items, didn’t even know the existence of the Item.

It was at that moment....

[Blood Ogre’s Dignity has come over your body.]

The System Announcement gave Hyrkan a warning.

Blood Ogre’s Dignity.

It was an expression one would hear when one was exposed to the Option of the Blood Ogre set. Basically, it meant that someone



wearing the Blood Ogre set was approaching Hyrkan!

Moreover, Hyrkan knew better than anyone as to the price of the Blood Ogre set.

“Shall we introduce our names?”

Ggee-rick, ggee-rick!

The blade of the two swords were interlocked as if they were kissing each other. The User asked a question over the sound.

Hyrkan ignored his opponent’s question, and he gave an answer instead.

“Rootbeer.”

RootBeer.

It was a drink that was popular in North America. It was similar to the likes of cola and cider. Of course, one never forgot it once one heard it.

“Are you part of the Clover unit?”

Even if RootBeer’s name wasn’t easy to remember, he would have remember this User.



“The Hahoe Mask remembered my name. It doesn’t feel too bad.”

Clover unit.

Of course, Hyrkan didn’t remember all of them, but he remembered the skilled Users. RootBeer was skilled enough to be able to pull off being the centerpiece of the Clover unit.

‘This guy is no joke.’

His core role was similar to Hyrkan.

He was the Assault Captain. RootBeer stuck to a monster’s body to deal damage and Armor Break. He was a Striker!

In Hyrkan’s estimation, it was a wonder that such a skilled User had managed to remain anonymous. A User of this skill would itch to be able to make a name for himself. He wonder how RootBeer had kept that desire in check for so long.

‘He’s the bait.’

There was a reason why RootBeer was conversing with him. Of course, it was part of their plan.

Hyrkan looked out of the corner of his eyes, and he could see other Users encircling him. They were slowly tightening the net.



Moreover, the User wearing the Blood Ogre set jumped out in his sight.

As if RootBeer didn't appreciate Hyrkan looking away from him, he continued to speak.

“Of course, my mood would get better if I'm able to kill the Hahoe Mask.”

Hyrkan's lips twitched.

‘If only Anugas showed up here…….’

In the end, he wasn't in a good situation. Even Hyrkan couldn't take on the Clover unit here. Even if he chose to face them, he would only have a chance at victory if he was the one that seized the initiative.

‘Please come out, Anugas-nim…….’

It made Hyrkan wish for the main culprit, who had been the cause of his worry, to show up.

At that moment....

– Uh? My magic?



– What’s going? Uh? What happened to my magical energy?

– Huh? You too? My magical energy also suddenly disappeared. What is this? Is it a bug?

– Did the Hahoe Mask use a Skill?

Suddenly, disorder started to spread in the Voice Talk.

The big fish named the Hahoe Mask was in front of RootBeer. Until a moment ago, he had a confident smile on his face, but the smile disappeared from RootBeer’s mouth.

He planned on ignoring the chaos, but the disturbance was too large to ignore it. Their voices were so loud that it distracted him.

Most fishermen, who was trying to reel in a big fish, became irritated when a strange sound was emitted from the surrounding.

RootBeer yelled with Hyrkan in front of him.

“We are still in a battle! Focus on the battle!”

He had yelled towards the Voice Talk, but the sound had reached Hyrkan too. Hyrkan smiled at his shout.

‘Our magical energy was erased. It seems Anugas has opened his



eyes. This will probably be the only time I'll be glad to see it.'

"Yes. You should focus hard on the battle. Be diligent."

At that moment, a marvel appeared from behind Hyrkan's back.

Zzuh-juhk!

The ground suddenly split open.

Koohng!

A massive four-armed Giant appeared from between the split ground.

The split ground had turned into a chasm, and the giant four-armed cyclops crawled out. Its eye were opening slowly. Its large blue eye shone brighter than a gem, and it was glaring at them.

[Anugas opened its eyes. It has eaten every being's magical energy.]

Anugas.

The giant that ate souls had appeared.



4.

Anugas.

When Anugas opened its eyes, the Users within 500 meters lost all their magical energy. It was a special ability that was akin to being struck by lightning for the magicians and priests. However, the fact that the Strikers and Tankers had to fight Anugas was more chilling.

Magical energy was also important to Tankers and Strikers. Their Skills couldn't be used for free.

Moreover, the number and variety of Skills used in battle was unexpectedly large.

All these Skills were forcefully sealed. The aspect of the game they took for granted was stolen away. It was akin to fighting in a location without any air to breathe.

Did this mean Anugas' Battle Specs were weak to balance out this special ability? Of course not. Anugas' health and attack capability wasn't overwhelming, but it had enough Stats that was befitting its status as a mid-sized Boss Monster.

Moreover, it had four arms, so the battle method was very difficult for the Users.



In simplified terms, if Anugas' two arms could grab both arms of the Users, the other two arms could do anything to the body of the User. The User that was caught couldn't do anything about it.

If the User could use a Skill, one could probably escape its grasp. However, it wasn't possible to use one's Skill.

This was why if one didn't have any plans or preparations for meeting Anugas, and if Anugas suddenly grabbed the arms of the User....

“Shit! Where did such a monster come from!”

It would be the end for the User.

The Clover Unit had been closing in on the Hahoe Mask, and now they were being killed by Anugas. The Users couldn't even resist, and they dimly realized the danger they were in.

RootBeer watch the sight as he was still interlocked with Hyrkan. The inside of his head became complicated.

‘Was the Hahoe Mask running away from this monster?’

They could now understand why Hahoe Mask was running away so quickly. This monster didn't make an sound, and it didn't leave any trace.



RootBeer would have also run away from such a monster.

At that moment, the Hahoe Mask also didn't make any sudden moves as he assessed the situation.

'Did the Blood Ogre set's Option draw Anugas' aggro? Thank you for wearing that set. It was quite fortunate.'

In truth, Hyrkan wasn't being magnanimous by not moving. Hyrkan didn't want to move unnecessarily, since he didn't want to become Anugas' target again.

RootBeer couldn't read Hyrkan's mind, so he asked a question.

"Do you know anything about that monster?"

"I do now about it."

Hyrkan gave a careful answer. Currently, a chill was running up Hyrkan's spine. Anugas had appeared behind him, so of course, he wasn't feeling comfortable.

In truth, it took massive effort to have this conversation. He was acting casual, but it felt as if he couldn't breathe..

"You led the monster to us."



“I led it to you guys? I was running away. You guys are the ones that got in my path. It isn’t as if I attacked you guys first. So who is at more fault here?”

“.....do you want to catch it with us?”

At that moment, RootBeer suddenly suggested an alliance to Hyrkan.

RootBeer was capable of judging the situation. It was really important to catch the Hahoe Mask, but an unknown monster capable of eating all magic had appeared. This was outside the scope of his mission.

Of course, he didn’t plan on really fighting the monster that had appeared in front of them. He had an ulterior motive.

‘At the very least, we have to avoid fighting the Hahoe Mask in this situation.’

RootBeer wanted to avoid facing the Hahoe Mask and Anugas at the same time.

That would be the worst case scenario.

“I don’t want to?”

Of course, Hyrkan knew the reason behind RootBeer’s proposal.



Hyrkan poured oil on the fire within RootBeer's heart.

“I don't know if you saw the first video I uploaded. It was called the Golden Skeleton episode. When this concludes, you should watch it. You'll have a new appreciation for what just happened. Leave me a reply in the comment section.”

For reference, RootBeer had seen Hahoe Mask's Golden Skeleton episode. He had used the Golden Skeleton to fuck over the Users that had antagonized him. RootBeer had realized how smart and cheap the Hahoe Mask was through that video.

In a flash, RootBeer came to a decision.

‘I'll take out the Hahoe Mask with me.’

Since he couldn't choose the best case scenario, he chose the lesser evil instead of the worst case scenario!

In a flash, RootBeer decided to take down the Hahoe Mask with him. He'll damage the Hahoe Mask, and they'll both die by the hands of Anugas.

Kah-ahng!

After coming to a resolution, RootBeer broke the stalemate. He pushed Hyrkan's sword away from its interlocked position. When he was given a brief moment to swing his sword freely, RootBeer immediately raised his sword high.



It was a large movement, so naturally, there was a big hole in his defense.

In exchanged for opening up his defense, RootBeer planned on striking Hyrkan with a powerful blow. He was aiming to damage Hyrkan.

He planned on giving his bone to take the other's bone!

He planned on dragging this down into a dogfight. He planned on wounding Hyrkan.

‘Huh?’

When he was about to bring down his sword, Hyrkan wasn't in RootBeer's field of vision.

When RootBeer raised his sword, Hyrkan hadn't show any signs of defending or counter-attacking the attack. When RootBeer pushed off with his sword, Hyrkan had fallen over backwards. It looked as if he was injuring himself by purpose.

Chul-puh-duhk!

He fell backwards like a log.

This was something one never saw in a battle. RootBeer had



conducted countless battles in Warlord, yet he had never experienced this before.

‘Shit!’

Even if RootBeer was a skilled User, he wasn’t able to react to something he had never experienced before.

In the end, the sword that contained RootBeer’s full strength sliced through empty air before it struck the ground.

During all of this, Hyrkan had kept rolling away on his side.

He looked so skilled at the maneuver that it didn’t seem like he was wearing a bulky armor.

It wasn’t something he had done only once or twice.

After Hyrkan moved his body out of harm’s way, he quickly got up. He immediately yelled out towards the battlefield.

“Thank you!”

“Catch that bastard!”

RootBeer yelled out as he looked at Hyrkan.



“Kuhk!”

At that moment, one of Anugas’ arm grabbed RootBeer’s arm. RootBeer turned to look at Anugas. Hyrkan shook his head as he watched the sight, and he got the hell out of there.



## Chapter 159 – Catch It Or Be Caught (2)

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4.

“Do you know the Watchman Style?”

A User wearing the Hahoe Mask asked the question. He was standing with his sword resting on his shoulder. Instead of an answer, the magician unfurled his middle fingers to flip him off.

The User wearing the Hahoe Mask snorted at the magician's response.

Poohk!

The magician sat on the floor with a mocking smile on his face. Hyrkan stabbed his sword through the magician's chest.

After being stabbed by the sword, the magician fell backwards. When the back of the magician touched the ground, the sword embedded itself deep into the ground. The sword in the magician's chest took root.

When the magician was pierced by the sword, he didn't react in any way. He wasn't dead, but he was basically like a corpse.

Forced Logout.



Hyrkan had the pleasure of watching the magician's death live, and the magician had given a token resistance. Hyrkan gave him what he deserved.

Poohk, poohk!

He gave the body just enough damage that it would kill the magician. He didn't abuse the corpse in anger.

After finishing his hunt, Hyrkan immediately became a hyena. He searched the magician's body then he took the wristwatch.

He put the Items into the Black Box, which he had strapped on like a backpack. A variety of consumable Items and four wristwatches was inside the box.

'This brings the total number up to five.'

Hyrkan added the 5th wristwatch into the Black Box.

Instead of moving on to his next target, he let out a long sigh. It was the first time he had let one out since the mess had started.

The sigh was like a comma that allowed him to take a breather from the commotion.

After Anugas made its appearance, everything had turned into a perfect shit storm. The Big smiles and the Clover unit decided to



spread out in all direction to catch Hyrkan.

They had realized that a battle with Anugas was impossible. A one-sided slaughter awaited them if they faced Anugas. They came to this realization when 2 Strikers, who represented the Clover unit was killed, and RootBeer lost his left arm in his escape.

Afterwards, Hyrkan immediately recovered the Black Box he had left behind, and he flipped roles by becoming the hunter.

Hyrkan wasn't gracious enough to let go of opponents, who had messed with him.

This was something beyond being greedy for wristwatches and loots. They dared to push Hyrkan into the brink of suffering a Game Over. Hyrkan had to retaliate in such a way that they would never forget about crossing him.

However, it was time for him to end his quest for retribution.

'If I do more than this, I'll get caught by Anugas. That'll be the end of me.'

Hyrkan checked the status of his magic. Currently, his magical energy was recovering. It meant that the open-eyed Anugas wasn't nearby.

However, this didn't mean Hyrkan could be at ease. There was always the possibility of Anugas tracking him with its eye closed.



While its eye was closed, its Special Ability didn't activate. Anugas' ability only manifested when it was about to appear in front of the target it tracked down.

Basically, it was too late when one's magic disappeared.

Hyrkan clicked his tongue.

'This is why I hate illusion type monsters.'

Illusion Type.

It was a new type of monster, which appeared in the Black Continent, in the Ruined Kingdom Episode.

Illusion.

It is as the word said. The body of the monster that one could see wasn't the real body.

If one delved deeper into the background story, one would find that these monsters were created artificially. A dragon used its power in the distant past to create an army as a means to defeat an ancient kingdom. Anugas was a member of the Dragon's army.

The Frost Knight and the Blaze Slime Dragon were similar type monsters.



One of the biggest characteristic for this Illusion type monsters was the fact that they could ignore the constraints of terrains.

The most classic case of this feature being used was the Blaze Slime Dragon. When the Blaze Slime Dragon was at a disadvantage, it gave up on its territory.

In the case of Anugas, it moved in a shape that others couldn't see, and it appeared only when a battle had started. Moreover, there were those that could swim through the ground as if it was in an ocean, and some monsters could even ride a shadow.

This was obvious, but even if monsters had the same Spec, the difficulty level depended on the Illusion type monster's special characteristic. The difference in difficulty could be night and day.

Basically, all the past experiences regarding hunting monsters were useless here. If one exaggerated the situation a little bit, one could say the Users were facing a situation akin to what they faced in the beginning of the game.

On top of it all, Anugas was the most difficult Illusion type Boss Monster.

‘Of all the monsters, why did Anugas have to show up? I’m pretty sure it isn’t suppose to come out at this point in the game.’

“Hoo-ooh!”



Hyrkan once again let out a sigh.

It wasn't a sigh of relief that came from his life having been spared.

‘Ah. This is driving me nuts.’

It was a sigh in regards to the horrible reality he would have to face.

5.

‘How could things get fucked up so badly?’

Sinclair had received live reports as the events occurred. When he once again summarized the situation, Sinclair was baffled.

‘Were we unlucky? Or was this also a ploy that was pulled off by the Hahoe Mask?’

The Hahoe Mask was the biggest fish amongst the big fishes, and the opportunity to catch him was right in front of their noses. He had thought it would be safe to say the fish had been caught. Basically, the hook had been dislodged from the fish's mouth, and the only thing left was to take a commemorative photo.

He received a live report stating RootBeer and the Hahoe Mask was exchanging blows, and the team was in position to attack.



Sinclair made a fist. He had jumped the gun, and he had already started his victory ceremony. He thought he had it in the bag.

However, it was all ruined when the bastard called Anugas suddenly made an appearance.

‘I know there are a lot of unreasonable monsters out there, but....’

Anugas had appeared alongside Hyrkan. Sinclair spent more time in the game of Warlord than reality, yet he was having a hard time judging the capabilities of this monster.

It could hunt down its prey without showing any outward signs. When it appeared, it pretty much nullified the nearby Users’ magic, magic recovery and the effects of the magic recovery Items.

It had a terrifying Special Ability!

They had been very fortunate in the fact that only 7 members from the Clover unit and Big Smiles guild members had died.

Sinclair was now able to organize his thoughts after seeing Anugas’ Special Ability, yet he couldn’t come up with a plan to defeat the monster.

‘So this is what they meant when they coined the term Over Balancing.....’



Sinclair had immediately sent a short report in regards to the Special Ability of Anugas to his superiors. During their last exchange, he was ordered not to go after Anugas.

In truth, even if he had been ordered not to do so, Sinclair wouldn't have wanted to fight this monster. Moreover, Sinclair didn't think there was any User in Warlord, who could kill this monster.

Even the Hahoe Mask had run away from Anugas. Unfortunately, the Clover unit got caught up in this mess.

At that moment, Sinclair's thoughts on what he would do changed.

To be precise, his orders had changed.

'Still, this might be to my benefit.'

He needed to research it further, but he had discerned that Anugas used the Heard Fortress as its base.

This was only a conjecture, but there was a high probability that the Heard Fortress would become the first foothold within the Black Continent once Anugas was killed.

Basically, the Black Continent will continue to be a harsh stage. It



won't allow the Users to progress in the game comfortably unless Anugas was killed.

At the same time, it seemed inevitable that the Users would become stalled in front of Anugas. It would be the start to a gridlock.

In this process, the ones that would gain the most would be the 5 guilds, who were trying to monopolize the Black Continent.

Currently, the influence of the 5 guilds were absolute in the Black Continent. In such a situation, Anugas would make this place a birdcage with no exit. Basically, the other Users in the Black Continent was like rats in a hole.

Moreover, the rat he wanted to catch the most was within this hole.

‘We’ve located the location of the Stormhunters guild. For the near future, the Hahoe Mask will probably operate out of the newly opened region. If I want to catch him, I’ll be able to.’

He had failed in catching the Hahoe Mask this time, but while Anugas was still alive, he’ll be able to attack the Hahoe Mask as many time as he wanted.

Sinclair had work to do now.

– Do you know the Watchman style?



Hahoe Mask's voice flowed out from the video at that moment. It was a footage sent by a fallen User affiliated with the Clover unit.

Of course, this was all coincidences.

Sinclair put on a big frown when faced with such coincidences.

'I'll kill you no matter what, Hahoe Mask.'

6.

The coffee made by the capsule coffee machine was overflowing with flavor, yet he dropped grape candies into it. Ahn-jaehyun brought the coffee cup to his mouth as he looked at the 6S V-Gear he purchased recently. The machine was quite splendid.

This item was many times more expensive than the security deposit of his one room apartment. This caused the installation engineers, who had come to install the 6S Model V-Gear, look at him with great suspicion.

"Fuck."

Even as he looked at the V-Gear, cuss words roughly came out of his mouth. Maybe it was thanks to the luxurious coffee, but his mouth was filled with the smell of coffee as he let out a torrent of swear words.



Anh-jaehyun didn't have a deep understanding about the flavors of coffee, and he didn't have the presence of mind to pay attention to such things.

‘How did everything get so tangled up?’

Ahn-jaehyun sipped his coffee. His expression expressed more than anger. It looked as if he was about to cry.

The reason being...

‘Catch it or be caught.’

The position he found himself in right now was the cause of these emotions.

Of course, the root of his worries was Anugas.

His life was saved thanks to Anugas. However, he wasn't in a situation where he could celebrate this fact.

Anugas had appeared as the boss of the Heard Fortress.

He couldn't turn the Heard Fortress into a foothold until he killed Anugas. He had to kill the bastard, then he had to go to the ravine that was located beyond the Heard Fortress...



If he was successful, he would be able to walk past the Block Field .

Anugas wasn't simply a stumbling block. It was an obstructor that prevented the Users from progressing along the road.

If he wasn't able to catch Anugas, the group of Users on his tails would catch up to him. Ahn-jaehyun would be caught.

He had to catch it or he'll be caught.

'Why the hell is Anugas showing up at this point in time? He shouldn't be out yet.'

In truth, Ahn-jaehyun hadn't been able to predict this.

To his knowledge, Anugas appeared about 2 months after the Blaze Slime Dragon was caught. At the time, the Users were near level 230 when they faced Anugas. The Users were able to somewhat acclimatize to the Black Continent as they went through a big Spec Up using the 2nd Advancement and the Ancient Power.

Despite all of this, it hadn't been easy to take down Anugas.

Ahn-jaehyun could clearly remember the result.

'Sweepers, Red Bulls and the Triple Wing.... The three of them



had to team up to take it down.'

The Sweepers guild boasted the strongest magical fire power amongst the 30 great guilds. The Red Bull possessed many Tankers. Then there was the Triple Wings, who possessed a massive number of guild members on par with the Big Smiles guild. The combined forces of these 3 guilds failed twice, and the prior failed experiences were the foundation in how they succeeded in their third Raid attempt.

'Is it a Balancing error?'

The appearance of Anugas meant the Warlord's game system thought this was the right time for this Boss Monster to show up right now.

From Ahn-jaehyun's perspective, it didn't make sense for it to show up right now.

'Then there's the appearance of Frost and Fire, which are Mythos rank powers... The events that should be happening couple months in the future are happening consecutively right now.'

Ahn-jaehyun shook his head from side to side, and his glasses went askew. Ahn-jaehyun repositioned his glasses.

However, Ahn-jaehyun didn't have the luxury to worry and ponder about the Warlord's system.



The core issue hadn't change.

If he wasn't able to catch Anugas, Hyrkan would be caught.

Who'll catch him?

He'll be caught by the 5 guilds, which included V&V and the Big Smiles guild.

The Hahoe Mask had already confirmed their intention with his body. Moreover, he had felt the might of the people gunning for him.

The Clover unit was strong. If it hadn't been for Anugas, Ahn-jaehyun would be drinking alcohol instead of coffee right now.

Still, it would be impossible to operate in the Black Continent with Anugas on the loose. The raw number of members brought over by the 5 guilds into the Black Continent was too much.

'If someone else can catch it....'

Of course, he could evade danger until someone else took down Anugas. This was one of the options he could choose.

'.....but it is unlikely.'



However, this wasn't the answer either.

One needed the 30 great guilds to step forward if one wanted others to catch Anugas. However, there hadn't been many of 30 great guilds, who chose to enter the Black Continent right now. Most of the forces in the Black Continent was from the 5 guilds, who had allied with each other. The other 30 great guilds lost the motivation to cross when they saw the queue they'll have to wait out until they'll be able cross the Voodoo's tunnel.

'The 5 guilds don't have the incentive to catch Anugas right now.'

It was actually beneficial for the 5 guilds to leave Anugas in place. Their first mission would be to take out the Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters guild, who will eventually become trouble in the future. Moreover, they would be easier to catch than Anugas.

Then there was the last option.

'If it's the Stormhunters.....'

The Stormhunters guild also had some staying power here. They had enough forces to attempt the Anugas raid, and they had enough power to have a chance of winning.

'If it's the crazy bitch, she would try it.'

On top of everything, the one leading the guild was the Storm



Queen Shir. Even Ahn-jaehyun considered her to be a crazy bitch. If she had a bone to pick, she would fight even if the battle looked impossible.

However, Ahn-jaehyun didn't consider the probability of her succeeding the Anugas Raid to be high.

Unless Ahn-jaehyun told them how to clear this Raid, the probability of them succeeding was in the single digits.

“Fuck.”

At that moment, a cuss word came out again from Ahn-jaehyun's mouth.

This wasn't a cuss word that came out because the series of worries he had.

In truth, it was an attempt for him to avoid reality.

Ahn-jaehyun had only one answer he could choose.

Catch, or be Caught

Ahn-jaehyun didn't plan on being caught. He'd rather die at the hand of Anugas than be killed by the 5 guilds.



There was only one answer left.

“This fucking game.”

Ahn-jaehyun started a simulation of the Anugas raid inside his head.



# Chapter 160 – Catch It Or Be Caught (3)

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7.

When Anugas appeared and it opened its eye, Hyrkan equipped the Circlet of Purification. However, it didn't work. Hyrkan, who had been looking at Anugas, shook his head from side to side.

The simulation in Hyrkan's head came to an end.

'I'm pretty sure I remember the Red Bulls saying that the Circlet of Purification didn't work against Anugas.'

Hyrkan started the simulation again.

Hyrkan once again appeared in front of Anugas. When it opened its eye, it nullified all magic, magical recovery and the effect of magic recovery Items.

Hyrkan faced Anugas equipped with the Dark Spot set and the Deposed Prince's Sword. It was the best setting for a Striker in Warlord.

Hweek hweek.

Anugas' four arms came at Hyrkan like snakes, and he kept dodging them. He was swift in his dodges. He swung the Deposed Prince's Sword, and it scraped Anugas' body. A deep wound was



made each time.

‘Its leather has considerable defensive capabilities. It might be better to use the Crying sword instead of the Deposed Prince’s Sword.’

Hyrkan’s sword suddenly changed from the Deposed Prince’s Sword to the Crying Sword inside Hyrkan’s simulation,.

Choo-roong choo-roong!

An additional sound was added in. The frozen battle started up once again.

‘Hmmmm.’

At a certain point, Hyrkan frowned. He had been earnestly fighting when Hyrkan’s left arm was caught by Anugas’ arm. He frowned as he watched Anugas lift him into the air.

‘If I continue to do a close combat, I’ll eventually be caught..’

Hyrkan stopped the gruesome simulation. He didn’t need to think along this thread anymore. He once again reminded the simulation back to the first scene.

He started the same battle again. However, Hyrkan had changed his Item setting. He also changed his battle style. Instead of a



straight close combat, he started a hit & run style battle.

‘Mmmmm.’

They looked like knights on horses with their spears raised. They ran at each other. It was like a jousting match. At the brief moment of contact, they glanced by each other as they gave each other small wounds. The battle continued for a long time without anything bad happening.

‘Ughhh.’

However, at a certain point, uninvited guests dropped in on the battle. A massive magical bombardment started falling towards Anugas and Hyrkan. The AOE magic covered the battle, and in the end, he lost.

At the same time, someone’s voice tickled Hyrkan’s ears.

Hyrkan. Do you know the watchman style?

‘Shit.’

Hyrkan once again ended the simulation.

Hyrkan didn’t attempt the simulation again. Instead, he looked at the ruins of the Heard Fortress. He moved his gaze to the side, and he looked towards the thick forest surrounding the Heard



Fortress. The cries of monsters were exploding out from the forest.

The actual sound that had tickled Hyrkan's ears was the sound of a battle between monsters and a group of Users.

Hyrkan frowned.

‘In the end, the problem is the Pasta bastards.’

Pasta.

Of course, Hyrkan wasn't talking about spaghetti.

Hyrkan called them Pasta instead of Five Stars.

Currently, it was a nickname given to the five guilds trying to monopolize the Black Continent.

Of course, the nickname Pasta didn't have a good meaning behind it. Many Users were dissatisfied with the activities of these five guilds, and they were the subject of derision by the Users. When the awesome nickname of Five Stars was given to these five guilds, some wise-ass User decided to call them Pasta.

However, this didn't mean the capability of the Five Stars was a joke.



The Five Stars wanted to make the Black Continent their own stage. To carry out this monopoly, they showed that they were very thorough in their preparations and planning.

One of this plan was to monitor the ruins of the Heard Fortress.

The Five Stars experienced a bitter lesson from Anugas, who was the Boss Monster of the Heard Fortress. Unless the Five Stars were idiots, it would be natural for them to pay careful attention to Anguas.

In other words, the Five Stars would know in short time when Hyrkan attempted the Anugas Raid. At the very least, the Five Stars were prepared to mobilize if such an event did occur.

This was another obvious point, but no one would help Hyrkan in the Anugas Raid.

“Fuck.”

Rough swear words came out of Hyrkan’s mouth. In the end, the situation forced Hyrkan to make a choice.

Basically, Hyrkan had to choose to share.

‘A day like this has finally come.’

Of course, Hyrkan would bear the full responsibility that came



with his choice. This was why he was letting out the rough cuss words.

8.

“What do you think?”

“You look pretty.”

“I don’t care if I look pretty. That doesn’t mean anything. Just tell me what kind of vibe I’m giving off.”

“In truth, a man usually doesn’t look too deeply. He’ll just think you are pretty, and he won’t care what vibe you give off.”

“How about you, Hahui? What do you think?”

At that moment, a loud sound erupted from next to Hatch.

“Queen is the best!”

Hatch furrowed his brows at the sound. Hahui had yelled out without any thought, and Hahui’s voice had almost burst Hatch’s eardrums. Hahui had yelled with all her might from right next to him. Of course, his expression wasn’t good when he heard such a sound.



Hatch continued to frown as he looked at the beautiful woman, who unfurled her hair. He looked at Shir.

‘It isn’t as if she is going out to meet a prospective marriage partner... Jeez.’

He reflexively tried to laugh out loud. However, Hatch immediately forced down the laughter. He knew he shouldn’t laugh in this situation.

“Queen.”

“Speak.”

“I want to be clear about this. It is ok to show good intentions towards him, but please don’t do anything that’ll cause a loss to our guild. If you do act in such a way, I really am going to leave this guild.”

This was the feeling he had as a loyal subject. He had spoken his advice towards the tyrant. His emotions were writ large on his face.

“How laughable. Your contract runs until 2050.”

“Shut the hell up, 2051.”

Hahui’s verbal tackle changed his serious expression into an annoyed expression. His terms of contract was Hatch’s achilles



heel.

Shir spoke calmly as she looked at the two.

“I want everyone to be on standby.”

She was calm and forthright. After ending her words, she turned her back on the Users that were looking at her. Thirty Stormhunters guild members were standing not too far away from Hatch and Hahui.

They were nervous as they looked at the back of their leader.

The source of their nervousness....

‘I never expected the Hahoe Mask to approach us first.’

It was the Hahoe Mask.

The contact had come so suddenly. This was the first time the Hahoe Mask had contacted the Stormhunters guild.

From the Hahoe Mask’s perspective, it should have been easy to contact them. The Stormhunters guild had sent so many love calls that the Hahoe Mask was probably tired and annoyed at receiving them. There had been many opportunities for him to return the love call.



This was the first time the Hahoe Mask had answered their ardent love call.

Of course, this didn't mean the Hahoe Mask was committed to joining the Stormhunters guild. The purpose of this meeting was to make a deal. Hahoe Mask didn't tell them the content of the deal. The only thing he promised was a meeting where they'll talk.

Of course, he asked Shir to come by herself, and Shir had readily accepted the proposal.

Basically, the Storm Queen would have a one on one talk with the Hahoe Mask.

‘If this goes sideways, our dealing will get endlessly tangled up. If it works out, everything will keep getting untangled.’

At that moment, Hatch was worried about two things.

First, he worried the Hahoe Mask might attack the Storm Queen. He could guarantee it. The Storm Queen couldn't win against the Hahoe Mask in a 1on1 battle.

The other worry was the fact that the Storm Queen had something akin to a crush on the Hahoe Mask. He worried she would agree to a bad proposal, because she was influenced by her emotions.

He was actually worried more about the latter situation.



‘She’s weirdly weak in front of the Hahoe Mask.’

The Storm Queen was interested in the Hahoe Mask, and her affections may be considered to be a crush. No, it might be something more. However, the Storm Queen’s personality didn’t allow her to send a love letter with her ardent feeling in it. She had a twisted personality that she destroyed whatever she couldn’t have.

Of course, her twisted affection wouldn’t help in a rational deal.

The problem with this situation was the stage . The Black Continent was a very harsh land that even the Stormhunters guild was struggling against.

In such a harsh land, the Hahoe Mask had approached the Stormhunters guild. At the very least, he wouldn’t be approaching them with peaceful intentions.

‘Please let it not be about fighting Anugas together. We have to avoid doing a Raid against a monster that had suddenly appeared.’

Hatch prayed once again.

The conversation between the two started as the prayer ended.



## Storm Queen and the Hahoe Mask.

They were the most skilled Users representing Warlord. The worth of the Storm Queen's name by itself was less than the Hahoe Mask, but everyone agreed that these two were the top 2 skilled Users in Warlord. Everyone considered it to be fact.

Their sex didn't have to do anything with their rankings. In many ways, these two were unprecedented in their accomplishments. Each of them were making their own unparalleled storyline in Warlord's history. The two of them were treated almost as equals. They were seen as being of equal rank.

Unless the Storm Queen and the Hahoe Mask fought for supremacy, this perception wouldn't change.

Moreover, there was the Immoral Prince raid footage. They had fought together for the first time, yet they were completely in sync. Of course, it held the distinction of being the most clicked video in regards to Warlord.

The two Users were facing each other.

This was a first for both of them.

"I want to thank you for that time."



The Storm Queen was the first to speak, and she had thanked someone else. This was a first in many ways.

However, Hyrkan did show any reaction towards her gesture. The only thing that could be seen beneath the Hahoe Mask was his lips. He didn't smile or frown. His mouth just stayed the same.

After looking at Hyrkan, Shir spoke once again.

“If you don't want a long talk, let's get down to business.”

It wasn't an exaggeration to say that Shir had the shortest temper in Warlord. However, at that moment, Shir wasn't angry. Instead, she went out of her way to move the situation along.

Hyrkan slowly opened his mouth as he looked at her.

“I'm going to do the Anugas Raid.”

He brought up the main subject of this meeting.

Shir had expected those words, so her answer came out immediately.

“So what? Are you asking for our help?”

“Will you help me if I ask for help?”



“I have to think on it.”

Anugas.

The Stormhunters guild didn't have a lot of information regarding Anugas. The Five Stars held the most information, since they had fought Anugas. They had gained information through the not so insignificant sacrifices of their members.

Still, the rumors had spread. The Stormhunters guild had received the information that this Boss Monster had a ridiculous ability that prevented the Users from using their Skills.

This was why Hatch had spoken to her. If the Hahoe Mask suggested they do a Raid, he told her to turn down the Hahoe Mask no matter what. He told her to ignore all his requests unless the Hahoe Mask joins the Stormhunters guild.

In other words, they would willingly fight with the Hahoe Mask if he joins the Stormhunters guild.

“Solo Play.”

However, Hahoe Mask crushed Shir's expectation with a single word.

“I'll catch Anugas by myself.”



Of course, Shir knew what Solo Play meant, yet the Hahoe Mask had spoken again. Moreover, Shir felt as if Hyrkan's words wasn't directed at her. It was directed toward some other unknown person.

Shir's expression turned to ice.

“Then what do you want from us?”

In truth, Shir had wanted such a picture. She wanted a situation where the Hahoe Mask shared fate with the Stormhunters guild. It was a radical idea, yet she had wished for it. However, Hyrkan had stepped on her wish in a single breath. Of course, her expression would cool.

“I want you to block the Five Stars from interfering with me.”

“Why should we do that?”

“If I fail, the baton will be passed on to you.”

Shir held herself back from complaining.

“So you want us to be the bridesmaid.”

It had been the same in the Argardo raid. They had to create a stage where Hyrkan would be able to focus on the Anugas raid. If



he failed at the Anugas Raid, the Stormhunters guild would hold the rights to attempt the Raid next.

Moreover, after fighting a battle with Hyrkan, Anugas would be in tatters.

On the other hand, that was the only merit they'll gain from this. It would be hard to expect anything extra.

Above all, the Stormhunters guild would suffer significant damage if they got in the way of the Five Stars.

Hyrkan used a card he prepared to convince the Stormhunters guild.

"I would like you to do me this favor instead of the thanks you gave me."

The thanks he had received was in regards to the Immoral Prince Raid.

When she hear those words, all traces of emotion was erased from Shir's lips.

"All right. I can't stand being indebted to anyone."

What kind of expression would Hatch make if he had heard this conversation?



However, Hatch wasn't present in this meeting. Moreover, their conversation wasn't being transmitted using Voice Talk.

"I'll do it."

Shir gave a firm answer.

"Then there will be no debt between us."

"Yes. There will be no debt."

In a flash, the debt that was between the two was gone.

Shir was able to finally bring up the subject.

"Hahoe Mask. You should join the Stormhunters guild. We'll promise you the best treatment."

When he heard her words, Hyrkan looked hard at her.

A thick silence had descended.

At the end of the silence, Hyrkan opened his mouth.

"In this game, the Stormhunters guild's symbol..."



Toohk toohk.

Hyrkan tapped the left side of his chest with a finger.

“I will never step onto a battlefield with the symbol placed there.”

His gesture reinforced his strong words. Shir’s expression turned much colder at his extremely strong words.

It was as if a snowstorm was about to form around Shir.

“What’s the reason?”

Hyrkan turned his back to her instead of telling her his reasons.

While his back was turned to her, he spoke in a low voice. He spoke in such a small voice that the only one that was able to hear his words was Hyrkan.

“There is the accomplishments I’ve achieved until now. I won’t be able to do it, because I would be ashamed of myself.”



# Chapter 161 – Catch It Or Be Caught (4)

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10.

A report came in.

“What did you just say?”

– There is an ongoing battle at the Heard Fortress. It seems someone disturbed Anugas.

When he received the report, Sinclair didn't ask for the identity of the person or group fighting Anugas.

There were only two types of Users that would willingly step into the ruins of the Heard Fortress to face the predator amongst predators. Either one was an idiot or it was a warrior trying to catch this predator.

If the Users were idiots, they wouldn't have been able to reach this far in the game.

This meant a warrior had shown up, and there were only two candidates.

Stormhunter guild and the Hahoe Mask!

He didn't ask for the identity of the combatants, since it didn't



matter. It could be either one of them. He'll be satisfied either way.

‘Since they went into the cage of the beast without our urging, we have to give them the treatment they deserve!’

He had prepared for such a scenario. He had put a group on standby that'll allow him to send a powerful magical bombardment against his enemies.

If he gave the signal, he would be able to mobilize the 500 magicians under the 5 guilds called the Five Stars. The 500 magicians and their guards would head towards the Heard Fortress.

Then they would stay at a distance where Anugas' special ability couldn't reach. Each magician would only have to use their magic once. They would be able to neatly take care of the Users inside the Heard Fortress.

Of course, they wouldn't be able to catch Anugas. However, they'll surely be able to kill the Users that went to fight Anugas.

Sinclair immediately changed the channel on his Voice Talk.

“Hands guild.”

– This is the Hands guild. Speak.



“It seems someone is attempting the Anugas Raids.”

– They really decided to move first. Crazy bastards.

– No. The fact that they are crazy is the reason why they were able to get this far. If the Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters were normal, it wouldn't have gotten this far out of hand.

– You have a point. If they were normal, they wouldn't dare to attempt this Raid. All right. Let's get ready.

– We'll get ready on our side.

“We'll get ready on our side too.”

Sinclair immediately got up from his seat.

11.

Chuh-buhk, chuh-buhk.....

Hyrkan walked with his armors equipped. However, he wasn't wearing his usual Dark Spot set.

He was wearing his leather armor. It was like a superhero suit one could see in a movie. The leather armor fit quite snugly around his body. The leather armor changed color to fit the surrounding



like a chameleon.

It was the Forest Pursuer set.

If one wanted to be the fastest User in Warlord, one had to have this defensive gear. Hyrkan appeared wearing this set, and the Crying Sword in his hand cried out.

Hyrkan stopped moving his feet when he came upon a large stone grave that had clear signs of being disturbed. It had been awhile, since Hyrkan had disturbed the stone grave, yet it had stayed disturbed.

This region had not been reset. This meant this place was a symbolic location.

‘As expected, it is here.’

This was why Hyrkan was able to reaffirm his answer.

Koo-goong!

As if to answer his confidence in his answer, the ground behind Hyrkan started to split open as it let out a loud sound.

It was the same as before.



A four armed giant popped out from between the split ground.

Anugas!

When the four armed giant appeared, it opened its eye.

[Anugas opened its eyes. It has eaten every being's magical energy.]

Anugas made its presence know by using its most powerful Skill.

Instead of being surprised by Anugas' presence, Hyrkan raised his sword.

Choo-roong choo-roong!

The Crying Sword was closest to Anugas, and it let out a cry. Hyrkan leisurely spoke towards the Crying Sword.

“Stop whining.”

He had spoken to the sword, but in reality, he was giving himself a mental note. He knew he was the one, who had to follow those words.



‘Ahn-jaehyun. You are the one, who wanted it this way, so never whine about it.’

The pursuer he could never shake had appeared in front of him. There was no turning back now.

He could have taken the easy road by fighting with the Stormhunters guild, but he had turned down that option.

In the end, the situation was the product of his own actions. Even if the result of this battle turned out to be disastrous, Hyrkan didn’t have the qualification to whine about it.

Of course, Hyrkan didn’t plan on letting this turn into a nightmare.

Hyrkan held his breath, and he charged towards Anugas. Anugas charged towards Hyrkan.

Koong koong!

Anugas’ steps sounded heavy.

Pah-bah-baht!

Hyrkan’s steps sounded swift.



The two types of sound converged, and the two sounds intersected.

Hoo-ooong!

Anugas' arms tried to grab Hyrkan's head, but empty air greeted its hands.

Sssook!

Hyrkan sliced Anugas' thigh.

Koong koong. Pah-bah-baht!

After exchanging blows, the two of them basically backtracked the path each other took. Hyrkan stopped his footsteps as he turned his body. Anugas' enormous body also came to a stop, and it turned its head. Anugas and Hyrkan glared at each other. Hyrkan looked at the wound he made on Anugas' thigh.

'It is as I had predicted.'

Hyrkan once again got into the same stance as before. He got ready to run towards Anugas.

'It has 3 Phases. The estimated Raid completion time is 44 minutes 33 seconds. I'll be doing the same thing over and over again. A thousand strikes should be enough.'



After he finished his preparation, Hyrkan ran towards Anugas again.

He started a battle that wouldn't allow a single mistake.

12.

The Black Continent allowed the Users to enjoy a bountiful harvest of monsters. The number of Users crossing over into the Black Continent was steadily increasing. The Game System adjusted the amount of monsters spawned to match the number of Users. However, these Users weren't killing the monsters that were being produced. Now there was an excessive supply of monsters.

While this was going on, the Heard Fortress Quest was activated, and it inevitably meant that the roads heading towards the Heard Fortress would have a higher number of monsters there. Moreover, the monster regen time would be significantly decreased.

It didn't end there. The Five Stars had placed many Users near the Heard Fortress to keep a constant watch, but the Warlord's System thought they were there to hunt. The System acted accordingly.

They were at the precipice of being flooded. The surface tension of the water was keeping the water from overflowing.



Of course, it wasn't wise to put in 1,000 Users into such a stage.

This was a totally different situation from the great battle. In the great battle, the monsters were in Siege mode, and they had exposed many of their weak spots. If the monsters hadn't opened themselves for attack, the difficulty of the great battle would have been unimaginably harder. Moreover, the monsters in the Black Continent wasn't weak like the ones in the great battle. The monsters here were all over level 200, and there were a new breed of monster amongst them. The Illusion type monsters were present.

This was the reason why the Five Stars were moving their forces slowly as they planned on positioning themselves to be able to bombard the Heard Fortress.

They methodically killed the monsters as they moved with their safety in mind. The Strikers went forward in advance to find and lure out the monsters. Then the Tankers controlled the aggro as the Magicians and Strikers took down the monsters.

– This is like trying to find mines.

The Poker team's Diamond Unit was in charge of bombarding the ruins of the Heard Fortress. The commander of the Diamond Unit gave a short summary of what they were doing.

– Exactly right.



– There is no downside in being careful.

At his words, people started to speak in the Voice Talk channel, which was labeled as the Hand's guild.

– The most dangerous situation will be when the Hahoe Mask runs away with Anugas in tow like before. At that point, we have to retreat no matter what.

– Right. Everyone has to take those words to heart. We have to avoid any losses.

– Still, we have to catch him this time. We can't always let the Hahoe Mask have it his way. Even the people above us are making a fuss about catching that bastard.

– Those kinds of thoughts are dangerous.

– Anyways, I feel more motivated to play the game recently. Everyone recognizes my face no matter where I go.

– We'll be on a program soon.

– Where?

– BBC.



They warned each other, and they shared honest advices. Then there were the occasional snippets regarding their personal lives.

However, it took only a moment for their conversation to turn into nervousness.

– The monsters are coming!

13.

Hatch saw the Users, who easily dispatched several dozen monsters. The monsters were easily over level 200.

Tsk tsk tsk tsk!

Hatch clicked his tongue as if he was playing playing an instrument.

‘In the end, we got the short end of the deal.’

Shir had accepted the Hahoe Mask’s proposal. For the price of accepting the proposal, the Stormhunters had to block the advance of the Five Stars, who were planning on interfering with Hyrkan from carrying out the Anugas Raid.

From Hatch’s perspective, this was a bad deal.



‘Why can’t she direct some of her affections towards me instead of the Hahoe Mask? Even a little affection would shave my contract period to 2045. If not, they should just date each other. They aren’t even dating, yet why do we have to get the short end of the stick in regards to a deal with the Hahoe Mask?’

However, Hatch didn’t express his complaints in front of Shir.

Moreover, he didn’t plan on doing shoddy work, because he thought this was a loser of a deal.

‘In the end, doesn’t the people low on the totem pole have to make up for the difference?’

Hatch raised his clenched fist into the air, and an enormous Ice Spear appeared above his fist.

Hatch aimed his Ice Spear towards the chaotic battlefield.

Ballista.

He was known as the most accurate Magician in Warlord. He closed one eye as he became a sniper. He aimed his magic towards the cluster of Magicians. After he weighed the distance, Hatch stopped breathing, and he threw the magic as he exhaled.

Shweeek!



The Ice Spear flew in a big arc.

Pha-bah-bahk!

While it was flying through the air, it fragmented into several hundred ice shards. The ice shards were about the size of an arrow, and it fell on the clustered Magicians like hail.

Blizzard Shooting Star!

It was a level 190 Unique Rank magic, and it was currently the strongest Ice type magical spell in Warlord. It was terrifying and awesome. The magicians, who admired this magic, were pierced ruthlessly by it. Their body was frozen in an instant.

Hatch clicked his tongue as he watched his handiwork.

‘If only my contract period would end, I could.....’

14.

The monsters were attacking the Heard Fortress’ Bombardment team. The ace team moved forward to quell the disturbance. There were only 10 Users in the ace team, and it was hard for them to face the monsters on the move. The monsters were powerful and difficult to face.



“The rest of you retreat!”

“Leave this to the Diamond unit!”

The Diamond unit was in charge of carrying out the most difficult task.

Their involvement was an inevitability.

Before Anugas made its appearance on the Black Continent, the hardest monster one had to kill was the Black Blood Troll. Of course, the Diamond unit was needed to take take down these monsters.

- It’s a magical attack!

- The Magician unit suffered a magical attack!

“Shit. It is as I suspected. Someone is herding the monsters toward us!”

- Be careful. We don’t have the luxury to....

While they were battling the Black Blood Troll, the Stormhunters guild showed up to flip the script by becoming the hunters. Of course, the appearance of the special unit of the Stormhunters guild was inevitable.



“Storm Queen?”

Moreover, it was inevitable for this special unit to include the Storm Queen Shir, who could use the Ancient Power of Flame. She faced the Diamond unit.

“Poker team. Recently, your fame has soared into the sky. I want to find out if your reputation is deserved or not.”

“We are affiliated with the V&V guild! A guild war right now…….”

“Shut up!”

The member of the Diamond unit brought up the subject of guild war to stall the Storm Queen.

Of course, it was a inevitable when Storm Princess Hahui’s morning star was planted on the head of the speaker.

“Queen! Let’s just crush them!”

This was how the battle that would change the future of Warlord started.



If one considered the Users in the upper tier of fighting capability, they could maintain their full concentration for about 15 minutes. Afterwards, it didn't matter how, but one's power of concentration flagged.

This was why it was important for one's concentration to drop in a gradual manner. This allowed the User to be able to adjust to the speed of the decreasing power of concentration. It was a matter of how well the User was able to fight as this adjustment continued.

With that in mind, Hyrkan's effort was worthy of an applause. He had been in this battle for 39 minutes, which required his full concentration, and he hadn't allowed Anugas to get in a direct hit against him.

“Hoo-ooh, hoo-ooh.”

It felt as if his head was about to burst open. His breathing was rough. If this was a World Title matchup in Las Vegas, the crowd would be on their feet clapping even though the match hadn't ended yet.

Unfortunately, Hyrkan didn't have an audience that would clap and cheer him on. Hyrkan's eyes could only see the one-eyed, four-armed giant with wounds all over its body.

‘As expected of the Stormhunters, they are very skilled.’

Hyrkan was very satisfied by this fact.



Not a single person had bothered him. This meant the Stormhunters did a really awesome job at blocking the disrupters.

Of course, at that moment, Hyrkan didn't feel thankful towards the Stormhunters guild.

Instead, he was filled with hatred for the Stormhunters guild, which had allowed him to reach this point. His hatred allowed him to maintain his sharp concentration.

‘There is no way I'll give this to them.’

If Hyrkan died by Anugas' hands, Anugas would be gobbled up by the Stormhunters guild.

Hyrkan was on the verge of catching this fish. Hyrkan wouldn't allow himself to give away this fish to the Stormhunters guild. It was unacceptable.

He didn't care if he was being selfish, stupid and petty.

Hyrkan hadn't reached this point in this game by being rational and reasonable.

‘I'll never give this up.’

His hatred and his aversion to giving this monster away to the



Stormhunters guild allowed Hyrkan to move.

Hyrkan had made his resolve, and he didn't shy away from looking into Anugas' eye, which had turned red.

Koo-uh-uh!

Anugas didn't spare his wrath as it directed it towards Hyrkan.

Its enormous muscular body was filled with wounds. It was as if it wore clothes made out of wounds.

The wounds weren't shallow. They were very deep. If the wounds were slightly deeper, it might be possible to sever parts of its body.

It was like the process of making a stalactite as the attacks accumulated one by one. Hyrkan was like Don Quixote of La Mancha charging against a windmill. He kept running at the monster at full force. It was an act that others would consider to be crazy. He repeated it several hundred times to create these wounds.

At the same time, the wounds were a count of how many time Hyrkan had knocked on a indomitable steel door.

'Shouldn't it be time for it to change? It should be about the time when the 3rd Phase should start.'



Anugas had a total of 3 Phases. The Phases could be identified by the color of its gem-like eye.

In the beginning, it glowed blue. After receiving significant damage, the eye turned red. In the last phase, all color drained out, and the eye looked like a diamond.

One had to go through these 3 Phases, and when all three signs appeared, Anugas' real body was revealed.

It'll be in a state where it could be killed.

This setting was put in place so Anugas couldn't be killed by Users through magical bombardment from afar. This meant the magical bombardment could cause damage that exceeded the HP needed to get past the 2nd Phase, yet the setting wouldn't allow it to move onto the next Phase. It was a very troublesome setting.

For a User like Hyrkan, who used unconventional methods that the Warlord System couldn't predict, the change of color in Anugas' eye was merely akin to a traffic light.

[Anugas is taking form.]

[Anugas' eye is shining.]

[Anugas' influence has expanded.]



‘It’s here!’

When the traffic light called Anugas’ eye changed color, Hyrkan flicked his fingers as if he had been waiting for this exact moment.

After couple seconds, 50 Skeleton Warriors and 3 Skeleton Knights came charging towards the horrible battlefield as they were led by the Death Knight. Hyrkan caught sight of them.

Hyrkan gritted his teeth.

‘I have to go all in.’

This was the last gambit prepared by Hyrkan.

He had summoned the Skeleton army before the battle started. Of course, he had emptied his magical energy, and he had used expensive magical recovery Items to activate the Power of Frost. He had summoned Bone Armor on all of them, and he even put several curses on each of their weapons.

It took him 30 minutes to accomplish all of this. When he finished his work, he had switched the Skeleton army into defensive mode.

They were prepared for this moment!

‘If I can’t end it here, I’m dead.’



The Skeleton Army appeared as they let out white misty breaths. They charged towards Anugas.

Koo-uh! Kooh-uh!

Anugas used its four arms to stave off the Skeleton army. One arm was used to fling Skeletons away, and the second arm was used to punch. The remaining two arms grabbed a Skeleton by each hand, and the Skeletons were rammed against each other.

Kwahng!

The sound of steel deforming was heard as the armors rammed against each other. In a flash, the bones of Skeleton Warriors were crushed. The battlefield turned into a pandemonium in short order.

Moreover, the Skeleton Warriors weren't able to recover for their injuries. Hyrkan didn't have any magical energy. He had a Death Knight, but the Undying skill couldn't be activated without Hyrkan's magical energy.

This was why the Skeleton Warriors were fighting with injuries. If a shoulder was blown off, the Skeleton fought with one arm. If its legs were damaged, the Skeleton crawled across the ground to harass Anugas.

There had been a dignity that came with the Skeleton army from



the fact that one couldn't kill them even if one tried. However, that was missing now.

On the other hand, the battle being fought at that moment by the Skeleton army was intense and brilliant compared to any other battles they had participated in. The Skeleton army was showing desperation in this fight.

Kill or be killed.

This was a sight that could only be seen if there were only two choices the Skeletons could make.

Above all else, the most desperate combatant on the battlefield was Hyrkan.

'I have to finish this within 5 minutes.'

He was going all in.

The Skeleton Warriors couldn't be healed, so they were basically one-off combatants.

Moreover, he couldn't use his Bone Explosive in a pinch. He couldn't stylishly turn the tide of battle with it.

Everything Hyrkan could put forward was out right now.



If everything here fell, Hyrkan would fall alongside them.

This was why he was desperate, and his desperation made him look bold.

It was always like this.

Hyrkan didn't back away in despair when faced with danger. Instead, he rammed forward straight into the danger and despair.

The Skeleton Warriors were occupying Anugas. The four arms were all engaged in fighting the Skeleton Warriors, so Hyrkan was able to climb Anugas' back.

As if to respond to their master, the Skeleton Knights and Death Knight moved urgently towards Anugas.

Of course, the Death Knight was able to accomplish the most in this battle. Even without its master's magical energy, the Death Knight didn't budge an inch against Anugas.

It was wearing the Dark Spot set, and it attacked with the Deposed Prince's Sword. At times, it actually made Anguas take steps backwards.

The Skeleton Knights also performed remarkably. While the Death Knight pushed Anugas, they came in from both sides. They stabbed into the wounds that had been made by Hyrkan's constant attack. The three Skeleton Knights moved like a saw-toothed



wheel against Anugas.

The Skeleton Warriors basically threw their bodies against Anugas. Their role was to make sure no one else would be caught by Anugas' hands. Then there were the Skeleton Warriors, who had crawled towards Anugas. They stabbed at Anugas' ankle, and it slowly ate away at Anugas' health. In certain instances, the Skeleton Warriors shone more than the Death Knight, since they didn't spare themselves in their attack.

However, the most important part was the fact that white Frost was forming on Anugas from their constant attack.

Power of Frost!

Then there was the fact that all the weapons of the Skeleton army was cursed.

Lethargy, Corrosion, Slow... Hyrkan's Curse Skills were very high in rank. It couldn't affect Anugas for a long period of time, but that didn't matter. If one ended, the second Curse took hold. If the second Curse ended, a third was applied. The Curses bedeviled Anugas.

Koo-uh-uh!

Anugas was letting out a continuous bellow now. It was a sound that was only filled with rage.



This was when Hyrkan started climbing Anugas' back.

Its body was like a cliff. Hyrkan used the open wounds as handholds to climb to its shoulder.

‘Let's end this.’

This action would be considered to be crazy by all. If Anugas used one of its arm to peel off Hyrkan, he was dead.

Even with this risk present, Hyrkan chose to get closer to Anugas. He was basically clinging onto Anugas.

However, before the Skeleton army's sacrifices could come to an end, he had to produce a clear result. He couldn't just stand back. He wasn't dumb enough to think that his Skeleton army could finish this on their own.

In short order, Hyrkan had climbed near the shoulder of Anugas.

At that moment...

Hweeeek!

Anugas, who was in a heated fight with the Death Knight, turned to look at its shoulder where Hyrkan was perched.



Koo-uh!

Anugas let out a roar of anger, and for the first time, Hyrkan let out a bright smile.

Accompanying the smile, Hyrkan stabbed his sword towards the clear diamond-like eye.

Keeeeng!

This brief sound adorned this single scene!

This was the scene Hyrkan had always wished for.



# Chapter 162 – Anugas’ Necklace (1)

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1.

[Anugas’ Power is fading away.]

[Your soul has regained its original strength.]

The Crying Sword thrust forward by Hyrkan pierced Anugas’ gem-like eye. It even pierced through its enormous head.

At that moment, the Announcement was heard within his ears. It informed him that he had won this perilous battle.

It was basically the news of his victory. Afterwards, Hyrkan heard the praise given only to the victor.

[The souls taken by Anugas was saved.]

[You’ve gained the Title ‘Rescuer of Heard Fortress’ Souls.’]

[You’ve gained the Title ‘Reclaimer of the Heard Fortress.’]

[You’ve gained the Title ‘Destroyer of Anugas.’]

[The Quest ‘Visit the Blacksmith Olf’ has started]

The consecutive praise was heard through Hyrkan’s ears, and it hammered away inside his head.



While this was going on, Anugas' body started to smoke, and it started to melt into a sticky liquid. Hyrkan detached himself from Anugas' body.

Hyrkan's expression hadn't changed. It hadn't changed as he heard the consecutive Announcements in his ears.

[Your Level has increased.]

The Level Up Announcement was what caused Hyrkan's expression to change.

When he heard the announcement, Hyrkan raised his head. On the right edge of his vision, he could see a mirage-like blue gauge. He checked the magic status window.

'Magic recovery... Ok.'

Until a moment ago, there hadn't been a single iota of blue light present on the magic status window, but now it was full. It was shining like a blue bulb.

Of course, the timing of his Level Up was planned out by Hyrkan too. He estimated how much EXP he would gain when he caught Anugas, and he hunted until he would immediately level up when he killed Anugas.



This wasn't a strategy often used by Users, but it was a well known method. It was a method used to recover health and magic during a hunt... Anyways, the Level Up Bonus was more effective than any magic recovery Items in his arsenal.

Moreover, at that moment, the Level Up Bonus was more important to him than any other time in this game.

‘Restoration.... Ok.’

When Hyrkan recovered his magical energy, he started mending his Skeleton Warriors and Skeleton Knights. The fractured bones started to mend, and the Skeletons, who weren't able to move, could move again.

[The Special Ability ‘Undying’ has activated.]

Then he activated the Special Ability of the Death Knight. There were Skeletons that were too damaged that they would revert back into being Skeleton Fragments if left alone for several minutes. These Skeleton Warriors were quickly regaining their shape under the Undying skill of the Death Knight. They stood on their own two feet in an imposing manner.

He retained 15 Skeleton Warriors, 3 Skeleton Knights and a Death Knight.



These 19 Skeletons were veteran heroes. It took them only 1 minute to regain their imposing figures. They were letting out breathes full of frost.

After the Skeleton army regained their dignified appearance, they created a perimeter around Anugas, and Hyrkan stood in the middle of this imposing group.

“Hoo-ooh!”

Hyrkan let out a sigh. It contained many mixed emotions. After putting his sword into his sheath, he raised his left arm.

Ggee-reek, ggee-reek.

The short sound of the dial turning on his wristwatch was heard.

“Slot on.”

After the sound ended, Hyrkan punctuated it with his low words. Accompanying his words, a striking silver armor with black spots started to surround Hyrkan’s body. In 3 seconds, Hyrkan took on the form that was most familiar to the other Users. He changed into his strongest form.

‘It take about 3 to 5 minutes for Anugas’ eye to turn into its Ingredient form.’



He had killed Anugas.

‘I caught it, so I can’t lose out on this.’

Hyrkan prepared himself for battle. He was now going to protect the prey he had killed from the other Users.

2.

– Hahoe Mask was successful in his Raid.

When Shir received the report, a sea of fire was unfurled in front of her. It reminded one of hell.

Zzuh-juhk!

The flames continued to burn, and the gigantic trees split open. They had been barely holding their shape against the heat. The trees let out dull sounds, which sounded like screams. No other sound could be heard.

Shir swung her sword in a wide arc.

Shweek!

A crescent sword energy burning with intense flame was emitted



when she swung her sword.

Hwah-roo-roo!

The sword energy pushed itself forward as if it was a flood. Devastation could be seen trailing behind the road made out of fire.

She had combined the Crescent Cut and the Ancient Power of Flame. It looked flashy, and its power was terrifying. The large trees and boulders, which had been barely holding onto their original form, was cut down.

This was a raging inferno.

After creating the devastating sight in front of her, Shir turned her back against it. If the Users wanted to chase after her, they would have to go through the fiery hell she had created.

When Shir took couple more steps, her subordinates gathered around her. The first one to speak was Hahui. She respected Shir more than anyone else here.

“The Poker team is quick to run away. Their talent for running away isn’t normal. It is as if they had practiced running away before. If they had stuck around, I’m sure I could have taken all of them down.”

It seemed Hahui was feeling guilty. She hadn’t been able succeed



in the mission given to her. As always, Hahui brought up words that would deflect away from her actions.

However, Shir just spoke briefly to Hahui.

“Good job.”

“Yes!”

Hahui put on a bright smile.

– I’ve caught around 70 of them. I think I took down around 50 magicians. They were all bunched together, so it was quite easy to kill them. Of course, this mission would have been impossible if it wasn’t for me.

Hatch butted in on the conversation. It wasn’t a coincidence. Of course, he hadn’t overheard the conversation through Voice Talk by accident, and his words were calculated.

– I was able to perform admirably unlike someone.

Of course, he spoke his words to needle Hahui. Hahui’s expression cooled. She didn’t know about anything else, but she couldn’t let Hatch get the better of her. However, she couldn’t come up with any words.

Hahui’s body shook, and if Hatch was in front of her, her fist



would already be planted in his face.

The most galling part was the fact that she knew Hatch knew this, and this was why he was needling her from afar. In many ways, Hatch was the most cautious member of the Stormhunters.

“Good job.”

Shir also spoke plainly to Hatch.

– Yes.

Instead of coming up with more words to make fun of Hahui, Hatch gave a short answer.

“We’ll head towards the Ravine.”

Their mission hadn’t ended yet.

The battle had ended.

However, the game hadn’t ended yet.

3.

– What should we do?



- What happened to the Diamond unit?
  
- We lost three. The rest escaped towards the back. What should we do? Should we meet up with additional troops for a head on confrontation with the Stormhunters?
  
- Where's our support troops?
  
- We are on the move. Give us 20 minutes.
  
- I think it'll take us longer to get there.
  
- The damage to the normal Users was much larger than the damage to the Diamond unit. Ballista's magic took out close to 50 Magicians. This is a loss that can't be glossed over.
  
- We couldn't even track down Ballista. That man basically became untouchable once he learned the Blizzard Shooting Star.
  
- So what? We should do nothing?

Sinclair frowned when endless chatter poured out of the Voice Talk.

‘Shit!’



He had crumpled his face so much that it seemed impossible to frown any further. However, he did just that.

His face looked deformed. Sinclair made a face that he dared not show anyone else as he let out his annoyance.

‘I’ve never seen a mess of this scale.’

Sinclair decided not to worry over it. It wasn’t a problem that could be solve by him worrying over it. This problem had ballooned beyond his capability.

The problem they faced was simple. Hahoe Mask had attempted the Anugas Raid, and the Stormhunters guild had helped the Hahoe Mask. This meant their opponents were pretty sure they could succeed in the Anugas Raid, and these two forces had allied themselves.

‘I put in one redundancy after another, yet none of them are working. What more could be done?’

The problem was the fact that they had already formulated an answer to this problem. This was why a thousand of their troops were sent to the Heard Fortress. They were sent to interfere. They also put in contingency plan that dealt with either the Stormhunters guild or the Hahoe Mask. They had prepared a mobile unit called the Diamond unit to deal with them.

‘Instead of the Diamond unit, we should have brought the entire



Poker team. Every member of the Hands guild should have been gathered here.'

However, their contingency plan had failed. The Storm Queen had gathered her elite members, and she had turned the table on them. She had hunted down the Diamond unit. The Diamond unit was supposed to delay any groups they met for 10 minutes, yet they weren't even able to pull that off. The Storm Queen was also a possessor of the Deposed Prince's Sword, and she possessed the Ancient Power of Flame.

Basically, they had a problem, and they had put forth an answer. However, the answer wasn't working.

This was it.

There was no point in them agonizing over the solution. The wise thing to do was to wash their hands of this debacle

'If this was the previous Hands guild, we could have taken out our enemies no matter what the cost. In the past, a single order was enough to gather everyone.'

Sinclair's annoyance started from this fact.

Hands guild.

The Hands guild operated under the notice of the world, and death in battle used to be an acceptable option. If needed, everyone



would die to further their agenda. No one would have been averse to it. Even in death, they would have dragged down the enemies by their ankles. There would have been reward and benefit that would drive the Hands guild Users to make this sacrifice.

If everything operated like the past, they would have considered a suicidal death with the Storm Queen to be a great opportunity. The forces needed to take down the Storm Queen would have been gathered without any fuss. If the Hands guild needed them, they would have gathered in a single location to become a chess piece on the board.

However, things weren't like that any more.

The members, who had originated from the Hands guild, were starting to enjoy the spotlight. They had too much to lose if they weren't able to enter the game for 48 hours. One couldn't lose something, one didn't have. However, they now had something to lose, and it was a bitter feeling to lose what they possessed. This was why they weren't able to mobilize on command. Power and rank had become shackles.

‘This will allow the Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters to take a step forward further away from us.’

Their body was getting bigger.

They were becoming more powerful.



Their opulence was getting larger.

However, they were becoming slow and sluggish.

‘If we want to block them, we have to put our life on the line. We have to be prepared to take them down with us.’

At that moment, Sinclair clicked his tongue from the bitterness he felt.

“It’s all right. Let’s just take a step back.”

He couldn’t keep his bitterness out of his voice. He spat out his words.

– What are you saying?

“Let’s leave a portion of our forces behind. They can follow behind the Stormhunters guild, and they could monitor the Heard Fortress. Even if we stake everything on this single die cast, it isn’t as if we’ll gain a solution. What happens if the Stormhunters guild runs away?”

– We’ll just drive them towards the Heard Fortress....

– No. Sinclair is correct. If the Hahoe Mask has caught Anugas, there is a high probability of the Block Field beyond the Heard Fortress dissolving. Then there would be no point in driving them



towards the Heard Fortress.

– Then we should just overlook our losses? If we end this business here, we'll look like idiots.

– Do we have a viable plan?

– We have to find a way!

The Voice Talk channel showed signs of becoming loud again. Sinclair became annoyed again. This was why he deliberately took a breath to calm himself down. He used his acting skill to make his voice sound calm.

“The only thing we can do now is to sacrifice several members to grab the ankles of the Stormhunters or the Hahoe Mask. We don't have any other answers beyond that option. If we have volunteers, who are willing to become sacrifices, I'll gladly help with the plan. For your information, it'll take me 3 hours to arrive there.”

No one had an answer to those words.

No one wanted to become the sacrifice. At that moment, Sinclair spoke into the Voice Talk channel.

He couldn't hold back his bitter words anymore.

“In the past, we fought through fire and water. Now we are all



busy worrying about our own hides.”

He spat out the bitter words.

“Fuck…….”

He was also guilty of doing this.

4.

It was a world where a news originating from New York could be spread in 10 seconds around the world.

- Something big is happening at the Black Continent!
- ⊥ What’s going on?
- ⊥ Don’t give us bullshit.
- ⊥ The Hahoe Mask and the Five Stars are fighting each other!

Of course, the incident in the Black Continent attracted the fans of Warlord.

Everyone interested in Warlord was now focused on the Black Continent. The enormous guild alliance called Five Stars was acting with high-handedness in this region. The Black Continent



was overflowing with monsters above level 200. The Stormhunters guild and the Hahoe Mask was also there. Then there was the mysterious existence called Anugas. All of these factors attracted attention to the Black Continent.

It was pretty much impossible to hide events occurring in the Black Continent when everyone's focus was on this region. Of course, this was why no one tried to hide what was going on.

- Hahoe Mask is conducting the Anugas Raid!

- ⊣ What the hell is an Anugas?

- ⊣ Anugas is a magic-eating monster. When it appears, all Class Skills become unusable.

- ⊣ Wasn't that a false rumor? There has been no footage released corroborating this fact.

- ⊣ I have a friend in the V&V guild. He said it is true.

The situation was updated in real time online as information was relayed to others.

- It seems the Stormhunter guild is helping out the Hahoe Mask. My friend is in the Blossoms guild. They went to interfere with the Hahoe Mask, and they are now fighting the Stormhunters guild!



– ⊥ My friend is in the V&V guild. He never mentioned anything about this.

– ⊥ I'm in the V&V guild. OP is right.

– ⊥ My friend is in the Big Smiles guild. He said the Storm Queen and the Hahoe Mask is conducting a Raid, and the Five Stars is helping them.

– ⊥ I'm affiliated with the Sweepers guild. We are just hunting right now.

– ⊥ I guess all the busy people are on here including the Five Stars and the Stormhunters. If so, I'm the Hahoe Mask, you retards!

Of course, in the beginning, false stories came out. It took people time to filter out the false rumors. As time passed, the stories that were coming out was getting closer to the truth.

– Hahoe Mask attempted the Anugas Raid. Five Stars tried to interfere, but they failed. The Stormhunters guild blocked them, and the Five Stars are retreating. It seems the Hahoe Mask has succeeded in the Anugas Raid. FYI, I'm affiliated with the Stormhunters guild.

– ⊥ Proof?

– ⊥ You should click on the Instagram account linked to my



profile.

– ㄴ Wow! He is the real deal! Wow!

Now the stories didn't have any falsehood mixed in with it. It was as close to the truth as it could get.

While this was going on...

Hahoe Mask's Youtube page was uploaded with a battle footage. It was his fight with the Skull Collector at the the Voodook's Tunnel.



## Chapter 163 – Anugas' Necklace (2)

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5.

It was a house that had a great night view. The house had a wine cellar, so one could enjoy this night scene with wine. The wine cellar looked quite expensive, and it was filled with expensive wines. There wasn't much space to move within it.

– It is a really nice house.

– Yes. I decided to indulge myself by moving into this place. When I used to be a baseball player, I always wanted to live in a place like this.

The interview was being conducted with the fancy house as the background.

The interviewee was Jameis Jones. He was more famously known as BigK in Warlord.

During the Warlord's second Main Scenario Quest, BigK entered the ranks of the 1st team Raid member after he distinguished himself in the great battle event. Afterwards, he participated in Red Bull's core quests and Raids. He showed off his surprising Skill, and now he was considered to be one of the top Magicians of the Red Bulls.

– When I failed to break into the Major League, I thought my



dream was crushed. I never expected to achieve my dream through this game.

His life had changed after the second Main Scenario Quest.

The most clear-cut evidence of the change was his residence.

He was now the owner of a house that anyone would envy. Moreover, a regular person would never be given a chance to be featured in such an interview.

– This is the age we are living in. Riches and fame can be had for people, who are good at playing games.

– This might be a bit of a rude question. It hasn't been too long since BigK-nim's career has taken off. However, you are already making a good deal of money. Could you guess at how much the most famous Users of Warlord make? I'm talking about the Users that even people unfamiliar with Warlord knows. This is the most burning question amongst our viewers.

– I'm not them, so I can't be sure. However, if I had to guess.... Currently, the two most famous Users in Warlord is the Storm Queen and the Hahoe Mask. The Storm Queen is already famous for being an heiress, so we should exclude her. The Hahoe Mask.... The house I live in right now is probably the size of his wine cellar.

– That is incredible.



– Of course, the Hahoe Mask’s identity is still a mystery, but there is wide consensus that he is incredibly rich.

Ahn-jaehyun was too flabbergasted by the video he was watching. The half-eaten Chocobar fell to the floor.

Chul-puhk!

The Chocobar was mushy, because it had melted. The Chocobar was in rough shape when it fell to the floor. Ahn-jaehyun picked up the Chocobar, and he checked if there was anything stuck to it. When he didn’t see anything, he put the Chocobar back into his mouth.

Moreover, he continued to look at the video with a flabbergasted expression. Ahn-jaehyun had been wordlessly watching the video, but he spoke without meaning to.

“Have these bastards lost their collective minds?”

Gulp.

Ahn-jaehyun chewed and swallowed the Chocobar. After tapping his Tablet PC several times, he switched the content on the screen.

‘So this is how they are going to trouble me?’

He had started watching this video, since he had heard about the



recent news regarding the Red Bulls guild.

The Red Bulls guild's 1st team members had been conspicuously absent from the spotlight in recent days. Numerous guilds were trying very hard to get across the Urugal mountain range, yet he hadn't heard a single rumor regarding the Red Bulls guild being nearby.

This meant the Red Bulls guild was progressing on a secret big project in a different region. This was why he had been collecting information on them, and he had come across BigK's recent interview.

Still, he never expected things to progress in this fashion.

Ahn-jaehyun looked at the screen of the Tablet PC with annoyed eyes, and he kept swiping at the screen. His temperamental actions came to a pause when Ahn-jaehyun came upon the page where he had uploaded the most recent video regarding the Skull Collector.

He had already seen this page over several dozen times, yet the sight in front of him never failed to transform his bitterness into sweetness.

‘The timing of the release was spot on.’

He had caught the Skull Collector a while ago. He had left the production of the Skull Collector Hunt video to the Romani films, and the final video was sent to him four days ago.



However, Ahn-jaehyun hadn't immediately uploaded the video.

This was the footage showing the Death Knight's first appearance. This video was monumental for several reasons, but he held back uploading the video. He waited for the right time.

Moreover, he came up with a plan when Anugas appeared.

He decided to put the video up on his Youtube page when he completed the Anugas Raid.

His aim was simple. When the Anugas Raid starts, everyone's attention would be focused on the Black Continent. When the Anugas Raid ended, everyone's attention would be shifted towards the Hahoe Mask.

What would happen if he uploaded the video at that moment?

'I'll easily get 100 million views.'

His aim was right on target.

In just a single day, he recorded 40 million views. He wouldn't have problem getting 100 million views. He could probably double that number.

The reaction was also quite good. His 6 sponsors were full of



praise regarding the video.

His bank account was beyond being in a good state as his sponsorship funds came in. It was rather impressive.

This pretty much washed away all the unpleasant feelings he had earlier.

Ahn-jaehyun considered the interview to be unpleasant, but now he had the foundation needed to turn BigK's words into reality.

'Anguas' Necklace, Token of the Secret Society, Deposed Prince's Sword..... Basically, I've reached the endgame in regards to Items.'

Basically, he had gathered all the arsenal he would need.

'I really reached this point.'

This feeling was sudden and unexpected.

He had continued forward in the face of all kinds of hardship and suffering. He had finally reached this point, and he took an assessment of himself.

'I'm really here.'

He was proud of himself.



Everyone including Ahn-jaehyun himself thought this was impossible to do. The task he set out to do was considered to be beyond impossible. It was idiotic. He was given an unprecedented second opportunity, and it had felt as if he was wasting this opportunity by pursuing the unachievable. It was so stupid that Ahn-jaehyun had yelled at himself before.

However, he had finally achieved this idiotic task.

He was pleased.

A happy smile formed when he saw the figure within his bank account.

Hue hue hue!

He was so happy that a silly laugh automatically came out of his mouth.

He was surprised, proud, pleased and happy.

The fact that made him happy above all else was the reality that his enemies were frightened and scared of him.

‘The only thing left is to crush them.’

Thirty great guilds.



The beings he hated the most couldn't rashly move against him. Every time they harbored hatred for the Hahoe Mask, he would extract a fair cost.

Moreover, they would feel a much steeper penalty for messing with him than before.

Ahn-jaehyun started drawing within his head. He drew out the future he wanted to see.

He first drew the scene where the Hahoe Mask put his foot down on the 30 great guilds.

‘Yes. I’ll grind them up into....’

He would step on them, and he envisioned himself standing above them.

‘I’ll become the best, and it’ll all be mine....’

They would be his stepping stone, and he imagined what would happen after he stood above all of them.

‘I’ll become the best, and.....’

He’ll rise above them, and.....



“Hmm.”

6.

As he was drawing the picture within his mind, he glanced at the capsule coffee machine.

When Hyrkan succeeded in the Anugas Raid, the Black Continent started to go through a significant amount of change.

[The Ruins of the Heard Fortress was released!]

[Black Continent's First Rest Area has Appeared!]

[Challenge the Black Continent!]

The biggest change was the appearance of the Heard Fortress.

When Anugas was deposed, the captured souls of the Ruined Kingdom's warriors were freed. They started circulating around the ruins, and the Subjugation Association sent NPCs to research the phenomena.

This was how a town was created near the ruins of the Heard fortress, and at the same time, the NPCs started giving out various quests.



The Quests were like road signs. Up until now, the Users were milling about without having any definite tasks to accomplish. Therefore, the Quests were like finding sweet water that ended their thirst.

On top of all of that, a cube capable of Item Production was installed in the town, and a Item Storage facility also came into being.

“I use the Wyverns to haul my Items. This is why my wares are expensive.”

A new NPC accompanied by five enormous Wyverns appeared, and the Users rejoiced at its appearance. Then the Ingredient Coins and Gems obtained from the Black Continent finally hit the market.

The Items above level 200 were produced quickly, and these Items started filling up the market.

In many ways, the Users that had been most daring in this environment had been the Stormhunters guild, and they were also the first ones to push forward.

[The Stormhunters guild was the first to enter the Ravine!]

[Stormhunters guild has released the footage of battles conducted within the Ravine!]



[The Stormhunters guild has revealed their Quests. ‘Our next destination is the Balos ruins, and the Olbrid forest. It is our main goal to push past these locations. We’ll be the main protagonist instead of the Hahoe Mask.’]

When the Anugas Raid ended, the Stormhunters unexpectedly threw themselves towards the Ravine.

After the Anugas Raid came to an end, the Hahoe Mask had to take a break to relieve his exhaustion. Then Hyrkan had to secretly go meet the Blacksmith Olf for the production of the Anugas’ necklace. He received the production Quest, and he had to move to various regions to gather all the Quest ingredients. The Stormhunters guild once again took the lead position.

As if they abhorred the idea of falling behind the Stormhunters guild, the other members of the Big 3 started to release news about their gains and achievements.

[The Red Bulls Guild found the Lost Island in the south!]

[Hydra Guild has started exploration of the Hell Cave in the west!]

It was the Red Bulls and Hydra guild.

After the Immoral Prince episode ended, there was no events that could be pointed out as being a signature achievement for the two



guilds. However, while everyone's attention was focused on the Black Continent located on the other side of the Urugal mountain, they headed towards a location far from the interests of the other Users. One headed south, and the other headed west.

The Stormhunters guild conquered the Urugal mountain range in the north. The Hahoe Mask conquered the Frozen Kingdom in the East. The two guild wanted to achieve something similar, so they headed south and west. They wanted to conquer something unknown. This was a gamble made by these two guilds, and now it was proving to be the winning move.

Of course, the world was surprised by their news.

Hyrkan was taken aback by the news.

“Lost Island? Hell Cave?”

‘This is nuts. Those regions are supposed to be released in the latter half of the Ruined Kingdom? Why now?’

Lost Island and the Hell Cave.

From Hyrkan's memories, the two locations appeared near the end of the Ruined Kingdom episode. It was the stages that set up the 4th Main Scenario Quest called the Dragon's Army.

‘Will these places also give Mythos rank Ancient Power? Will it?’



At the same time, he dug through his memories. He remembered that the Ancient Power of Darkness and Light could be earned at those locations.

‘No, it’s a guarantee that it’ll show up there. It came out in the Frozen Kingdom and the Urugal mountain range, so it should....’

The world was changing by the hour.

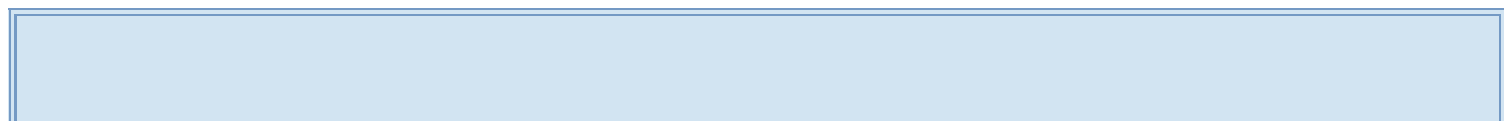
‘This game has gone nuts. Why would it make sense to pour out all the Mythos Rank Ancient Power at once?’

When the Item he wanted the most was completed, Hyrkan started running full tilt on a stage that was completely different from what he remembered.

7.

“The power of the gem is dangerous. Please use it with discretion. If you aren’t careful, you might push the world towards its ruin.”

Hyrkan was now familiar with the face in front of him. The Blacksmith Olf spoke as he passed over a necklace embedded with a thumbnail-sized diamond. Hyrkan carefully took the necklace.





[You've gained the Anugas' Necklace.]

When Hyrkan fondled the necklace, the Item Option popped up on top as a holographic window.

[Anugas' Necklace]

\*Main Properties

- Epic Rank Item
- All Stats +188
- Class related Stats +222
- Required Level : level 200

\*Sub-properties

- When equipped, 10% increase in health
- When equipped, 10% increase in magic
- When equipped, 10% increase in movement speed
- When equipped, 10% increase in all damage
- When equipped, damage received is decreased by 10%
- When equipped, cool time is decreased by 10%
- The magic and stamina consumed when using a Skill is decreased by 35%
- This Item cannot be damaged.

\*Miscellaneous

This necklace holds the power of the Ancient Weapon Anguas. It holds the power of its eye. It'll allow the wearer's ability to be brought out to a fearsome level.



The necklace had a filthy amount of Options, and these were the most desired Options. Hyrkan let out a sigh of satisfaction as he looked at the Anugas' Necklace.

“Hooo.”

After catching Anugas, it took him 5 days to complete the Anugas' Necklace production Quest.

The tasks he had accomplished flashed before his eyes. Then he started to think about the memories from his distant past.

‘I can’t believe I’ve obtained it.’

Hyrkan thought about the first time he came up with the ridiculous idea of making an All Strength Necromancer. He had to come up with with a way to make up the much needed magical energy. He remembered going around in ridiculous getups.

Hyrkan had come up with the idea during that time. If he had an Item similar to Anugas' Necklace, he wouldn't have worried about lacking magical energy.

However, at the time, he never even considered the fact that he would be able to obtain such an Item. This was why he never made plans assuming that he'll have such an Item.

However, he now had the Anugas' necklace. Hyrkan had



considered it to be a unreachable star in the sky. He had thought it was something he would never be able to catch, yet this star was shining brightly within Hyrkan's grasp.

‘How much will I be able to get if I sell this?’

Afterwards, he thought about it in terms of materialistic value.

It was inevitable. Anugas' Necklace wasn't a bound Item. It could be traded, and the required level was only level 200. If one considered the Options, it could be used even when one became level 300 or even 400.

Then there was the fact that Warlord contained rich Users willingly to pay ridiculous amounts of money for Items. These people were so rich that they didn't know what to do with all their money.

Currently, there was the original owner of the name Rich Lich named Himala playing this game. Then there was the original owner of Anugas' Necklace named Mateo Walker. He wasn't as rich as Himala, but he would gladly pay any price for this Item. They would easily spend several hundred thousand dollars for it.

It would be able to turn anyone's life around. Basically, one could easily buy a building by selling this Item.

Of course, Hyrkan's thoughts didn't end there.



‘If I equip the Deposed Prince’s Sword, Anugas’ Necklace and the Secret Society Ring...’

If he used the Deposed Prince’s Sword, and the Anugas’ necklace, he could reduce his magical energy consumption of his Skills by 60%. What if he put on the Token of the Secret Society, which increased magical recovery by 20%? This would be combined with the 10% increase in magic by the Anugas’ Necklace.

‘In reality, the combined effect will reduce my magic consumption by 70%.’

It was well over half!

With those Options as background, he could once again eat expensive consumable Items like he was chewing gum.

He would no longer feel the lack of magical energy he felt after he gained the Power of Frost.

Instead, he had magical energy to spare.

Now he just had to invest in Skills that he couldn’t purchase, because he didn’t have enough magical energy to spare.

‘I’ll have to burn through Skill Books to obtain the [Conductor] skill. Then the page of Ancient Power I have.... It’ll be fine if I use it on the [Skeleton Knight] rather than the [Golem Summon].’



Hyrkan decided to invest in his Skeleton Knight.



## Chapter 164 – Anugas' Necklace (3)

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8.

The maximum number of Skeleton Warriors able to be summoned through [Skeleton Fragment(A)] was six. This number increased to 12 when the Necromancer became a Lich as one passed through the 1st and 2nd Advancement. If one used the Transcendent rank Ancient power at this point, one would be able to summon 18 Skeleton Warriors.

Similarly, this number could be grown by learning Skills that would allow the increase the number of Skeletons that could be summoned. The [Skeleton Magician(A)] allowed one to summon four more Skeletons, the [Skeleton Knight (A)] allowed for an additional six, and the [Chivalry (C)] allowed for four more.

In the case of the [Skeleton Science(A)], it allowed six more Skeletons, and the maximum number of Skeletons grew to 12 when the Transcendent rank Ancient Power was applied.

That was a total of 44 Skeleton Warriors.

Then he could summon the Death Knight, and the Special Skill named [Leader] would allow a total of 12 Skeleton Warriors or Magician to be summoned, and this didn't include the additional Skeleton Knight. If he included the Death Knight and the two additional Skeleton Knights he could summon, his Skeleton army was up to 59.



It was the number of forces he used when Hyrkan fought Anugas.

However, he was overtaxing his abilities when he summoned all of them. Moreover, if he had the Power of Frost activated as he used the Bone Explosives, Bone Spears, Bone Armor, Madness Helm and any other Curse related Skills, there was no chance for him to recover his magical energy. He could drink expensive recovery Items continuously, yet he wouldn't be able to do it.

This was why Hyrkan had excluded his Golem from the fight with Anugas. He didn't have the luxury to operate the Golem.

At the same time, this was also the reason why he had left one of the Scrolls unused. Hyrkan had thought over it.

At the time, he had thought about using the Skill Reinforcement on the Golem Summon or the Skeleton Knights, which would further drained his magical energy. He hadn't had the Anugas' Necklace yet, so he had worried if he could endure the Spec Up.

Of course, Hyrkan didn't have to worry about those details anymore.

Hyrkan looked at the sight in front of him. He forgot about his worries as he looked at the battlefield. It wasn't just his recent worries. The worries he had accumulated over time was all forgotten.

The sight in front of him was awesome.



‘As expected of the king of the endgame.’

The Death Knight was the focus of the battlefield. It rode a Skeleton Steed, which was as big as a tree. It was an enormous beast, yet it could lightly jump over anything. There was no one on the battlefield that could catch the Death Knight on its steed.

Basically, the Death Knight was the main star, since it could adapt to any stage.

The Horned Wolves were the owners of the Olbrid Forest. They were known for their powerful skills, and they had an annoying characteristic of traveling in packs. However, the 5 meter long beasts couldn't do anything in front of the Death Knight's tainted sword.

Koo-oohng, koo-oohng!

The Skeleton Steed jumped over its enemies, and the Death Knight stabbed and cut at them. The Horned Wolves had no way of fighting back. They showed a bit of their intelligence as they surrounded the Death Knight, but a single leap could destroy their perimeter.

‘I've gathered five Skeleton Knights. How frightening.’

Then there was the sword swinging Skeleton Knights, who charged into the battle with the Death Knight. The Skeleton



Knights were like the Death Knight's backup dancers. They didn't received the full spotlight, but they were able to take stage with the main star.

The Horned Wolves exposed their sides or tails as they chased after the Death Knight. The Skeleton Knights ran towards the Horned Wolves, and they put all of their momentum at the tip of their swords to pierce the bodies of the Horned Wolves.

It wasn't as if the Skeleton Knights were lacking in their ability to engage frontal assaults from the Horned Wolves. It was a given that the Skeleton Knights could block the frightening headbutt by the monsters with their shields. They were able to use their swords to deflect the unique attack of the horns being used like knives. The Skeleton Knights were also quite skilled at evading blows.

The Death Knight cut down its enemy with its overwhelming power. On the other hand, the Skeleton Knights cut down their enemies with technical skill.

This was especially true as the last scroll of the Ancient Power was used to strengthen the Skeleton Knight Skill. He had gained the Leader Skill by burning through the 31 No Name Skill books, so he was able to summon 5 Skeleton Knights. The battles fought by the Skeleton Knights were completely changed at this point. In the past, the Skeleton Knights had to fight against numerically superior opponents. However, in most cases, the Skeleton Knights held the numerical superiority now.

It was a nightmare for the monsters, who had to face them.



‘The Skeleton Warriors are having a lot of fun.’

The Skeleton Warriors looked like excited fans cheering on the star and the backup dancers. They didn’t spare their bodies to help out the Death Knight and the Skeleton Knights. They were very thorough in killing the remnants of the Horned Wolves.

There was only a single wounded Horned Wolf left, and 15 Skeleton Warriors swarmed it like bees. If the Horned Wolf tried to get close to the Death Knight or the Skeleton Knights, the Skeleton Warriors stopped it even if they had to sacrifice their lives.

As the battle continued, the surrounding started to be taken over by white frost. It was as if the stage was being decorated by ice as the field started to freeze. The vegetation started to struggle from the cold air.

The pack of 13 Horned Wolves had already taken down a large number of Users over level 200. These were Users skilled enough to treat the Black Continent as their hunting ground. However, it didn’t take long for these monsters to become corpses by the Skeletons.

When all the Horned Wolves were killed, Hyrkan held back a smile.

‘My magical energy... Ok. I’ll be able to maintain a force of this size now.’



He looked at his magical energy status. It had decreased significantly, but it hadn't bottomed out yet. Hyrkan smiled after checking the status of his magical energy.

‘Perfect.’

It wasn't as if he was overflowing with magical energy.

He couldn't maintain this enormous army.

For this one battle, Hyrkan had to rack up an incredible amount of expense. The cost of this battle was akin to the total Consumable Items used by level 150 Users in a Boss Monster Raid.

He had lost money.

However, the only thing Hyrkan needed right now was to Level Up through EXP gained through battle.

If it was a conventional battle, he would have gained financially, but it was impossible to gain money through this battle style.

If it was the past, Hyrkan would have shuddered at this fact.

‘This is too perfect.’



However, Hyrkan felt satisfied now.

‘It is as Lich Rich had said. It’ll be possible for me to buy EXP with money.’

He was beyond being satisfied. Hyrkan was in a good mood. He put the magic recovery candy, which he had bought at a higher than market price, into his mouth, and he chewed it into pieces.

Afterwards, Hyrkan took out a gem from his pocket, and he squeezed it. The gem melted, and a flame started to pour out from his clenched fist.

When the flame spread out on the floor, the Fire Golem took the shape of the Black Hound.

Hyrkan gestured towards the Black Hound Fire Golem. He pointed towards a dense patch of the forest.

Go!

This was the meaning behind the gesture. At his gesture, the Black Hound Fire Golem displayed the nature of the Black Hound. It showed its true nature as a tracker, and it moved faster than any being within the forest.

The Fire Golem ran through the Olbrid Forest.



Hwah-roo-roo-roo!

A trail of fire started to burn behind it, and the fire grew uncontrollably.

Ah-oooooooooh!

The fire agitated the Horned Wolves that were filling up the Olbrid Forest. As they used Howling, the Horned Wolves started to pop out as if they were threatened by the flames. Hyrkan smiled as he watched the sight.

‘If I had this much power to use in the Olbrid forest in the past....’

His smile suddenly disappeared. As his smile disappeared, he remembered a certain memory.

He had goosebumps when he thought about it. He thought about the worst point in his life as annoyance swept over him. No matter how much happiness he felt, the memory of that day made him brood over the despair he had felt.

However, as he thought about it, Hyrkan once again smiled.

9.

These words were spoken by the original Rich Lich.



“I chose to be a Necromancer, because it was the only Class that allowed me to buy EXP with money.”

As one increased in level, the money needed to stay in the top echelon of Users in Warlord increased exponentially. This was why the Users in the top one percent used money to buy EXP to stay on the top.

However, Rich Lich’s words hadn’t been pointing out this fact.

“This isn’t about efficiency. The Necromancer can level up the fastest if you pour money into it.”

This was one of the legendary advice left behind by Rich Lich.

When he soloed the Queen Fire Ant, many Users followed behind Rich Lich’s steps, and they became Necromancers.

Of course, they attempted to follow his footsteps, but it wasn’t possible without the vast money spent by Rich Lich. The desire to mimic him died down.

However, Rich Lich hadn’t lied.

It was as he had said. If one compared a Necromancer to a Class of a similar level, it showed an overwhelmingly higher Level Up pace. However, one needed to spend a stupid amount of money.



This was why Rich Lich had started a fad, yet there weren't that many Users, who chose to be a Necromancer in the same vein as Rich Lich.

The Users that were currently following after the Hahoe Mask was probably feeling the same emotions as the Users that had followed Rich Lich.

- Didn't the Hahoe Mask just eat the Blue Sapphire candy?
- ㄴ No way. The market price on that thing is 490 gold.
- ㄴ Isn't that something only one eats during a Raid?
- ㄴ Who the hell eats that even in a Raid? Even the Users of the 30 great guilds and the Underfoot guilds only eat it during life and death situations.
- ㄴ FYI, that candy taste terrible. I've eaten it before, and it has a strange taste. There is a bitter taste. It is like licking rubber.
- It is worth 490 gold, yet he is eating it like regular candy. If he has that much money, wouldn't it be better to buy steak in real life?

After the Skull Collector hunt video, the Hahoe Mask released his paid video. When he released the Anugas Raid video, a million



copies was sold on the first day of its release. He had achieved consecutive hits after the Frozen Kingdom episode.

Now the brand called the Hahoe Mask had proven itself to be a trustworthy brand in terms of selling paid videos.

Afterwards, Hahoe Mask surprised everyone by suddenly uploading the battle at the Olbrid Forest as a free video.

Currently, many new hunting grounds were being unlocked, and the Olbrid Forest was the most difficult location. However, the Hahoe Mask had been able to traverse the Olbrid Forest by himself, and he was able to sweep away the monsters with overwhelming power. The Hahoe Mask's presence was beyond electrifying. His mere presence gave everyone the goosebumps.

This was what Ahn-jaehyun was aiming for.

He had worked hard to upload these videos, and he read the reactions in the comment section. Ahn-jaehyun smiled as he repositioned his glasses.

‘Yes. I have to bring this matter to a head.’

Ahn-jaehyun drew a picture. If he followed the layout in his picture, he'll have enough power to step on the 30 great guilds. However, if he stepped on the heads of the 30 great guilds, these guilds wouldn't just stay still.



He had to step a guild so hard that the other guilds would wish for him to step over them. He had to create such a situation.

He had to show them the different.

He had to show them that he was in a different league as them!

He couldn't express this truth with words. He had to show it with his skill and results.

He had to do it now.

The Hahoe Mask couldn't just show off his outstanding battle capability. He had to show everyone that he could progress through this game at overwhelming speed.

This was a game.

He wasn't going to conduct a lame war. In the end, he couldn't overcome the numerical advantage of the guilds. However, it was possible for him to gain the highest level. He could overtake all of them.

'I have to learn the [Steel Golem] at level 220, [Ice Golem] at level 230 and the [Skeleton Exhibition] at level 240. I'll basically have an army of a hundred. Wasn't Rich Lich's fighting power at that level when he caught the Queen Fire Ant?'



When he reached that point, no one would be able to compete with the Hahoe Mask on the same stage.

‘Of course, I’m much stronger than Rich Lich when he caught the Queen Fire Ant.’

Eventually they will self-destruct on their own. When the Hahoe Mask appeared in a region, he didn’t want them to get mad. They would avoid him as if they had stepped on shit.

If he wanted such result, he needed only one more thing. Ahn-jaehyun touched the Tablet PC. He didn’t have to touch it multiple times. He just had to touch it once, and Ahn-jaehyun was immediately moved towards a bookmarked page. He was moved to a Youtube page.

The title of the page was the FirstOne’s Diary.

‘If I catch him, it’ll be the end game.’

He was the last prey Ahn-jaehyun had to catch.

10.

“Mmmm.”

He was called the leader of the Virtual Reality era. He was the founder of Tobot Soft, Tobi Gwynn.



He usually displayed a boyish temperament in everything he did, yet he looked different from his normal self.

The lights, which was always turned to its highest setting, was dimmed. Tobi Gwynn sat beneath the dimmed light, and he looked far different from energetic self. He had gathered his two hands in front of his mouth as if he was praying.

One could see him breathing into his hands as if he was trying to warm them.

His acquaintances wouldn't believe this was Tobi Gwynn even after seeing him like this.

The only one, who was able to see him like this, was Chen. He had the unique title of being the leader of the Planning and General Affairs team.

Tobi Gwynn spoke to Chen.

“How many months did we lose?”

“It is impossible to quantify it right now.”

“We can't calculate it at all?”

“We can no longer use the expression that we are losing time.”



Instead of an answer, Tobi Gwynn moved his hands near his mouth. He started to stroke his rough beard.

Buffering.

Chen knew Tobi Gwynn well, and he had named this habit as buffering.

This meant that Tobi Gwynn was stuck on a problem.

Chen spoke as he looked at him.

“It seems the new project backfired. It was my mistake. I should have conducted a more proper investigation...”

“I signed off on it.”

Tobi Gwynn stopped stroking his chin, and he waved his hand.

“I don’t blame you for that. In the end, the buck stops with me. I’m the one, who made the decision. The new project backfired, and the important thing to do right now is to recover what can be salvaged. Do you have anything readied for me?”

“I’ve readied several projects.”



Instead of answering, Tobi Gwynn look at Chen's expression. The room was darker than usual, so Chen's emotionless face looked more rigid today. Tobi Gwynn furrowed his brows.

Chen interpreted it as a sign for him to speak, so he gave his answer.

“All the projects up until now hasn't worked at all. I don't think any of the project I've prepared will work.”

“What is the FirstOne's level?”

It was a sudden question, yet Chen didn't hesitate to answer the question. It was obvious that he knew the answer.

“He is level 245.”

“The estimated time.... Yes... The report said 155 days, 22 hours and, 11 minutes.”

Tobi Gwynn had asked the question, yet he answered it. He found the answer inside his head. Afterwards, he stopped stroking his beard.

The area around his mouth twitched, but that was it.

He opened his mouth.



“The name of the Hydra guild’s leader... Eric Gomes. Yes, his name was Eric Gomes. He worked at Wall Street, and he mainly traded in regards to startups in the Silicon Valley. I’m pretty sure I saw this number before....”

As he mumbled to himself, Tobi Gwynn started poking at his desk. A hologram shaped as a phone appeared in front of Tobi Gwynn’s eyes.

The holographic phone started to ring.

Tobi Gwynn spoke in a low voice as the ring continued.

“I hope I correctly remembered his number.”

– This is Eric Gomes. Who is this?

The conversation was about to start, so Chen quietly exited the room. Tobi Gwynn opened his mouth.

“I’m Tobi Gwynn. ”

– Tobi Gwynn? Tobi, Tobi, Tobi.... My god.

“We’ve met once before. I remembered the number from that time.”



– I remember the meeting. It was 6 years ago. It was a party where 500 people gathered.

“I would like to speak to you.”

– Please wait a moment. I’m in the midst of a hunt... I’ll need a little bit more time.

“I understand. I understand that the game you are playing is a bit difficult and annoying. I fully understand.”

Tobi Gwynn was joking, but his expression had hardened.



# Chapter 165 – Trace Of Bokan (1)

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1.

Koo-oohng!

The Frost Golem Snake, which boasted an enormous body length of 8 meters, appeared. The monsters had been stumbling backwards, but now they quickly turned their gazes towards the Golem in fright.

The shaggy Orangutans weren't small. They were 2 meters tall, and every one of them had crude instruments for weapons. Moreover, they wore a very crude wooden mask. This was why one couldn't see their expressions, but their actions clearly showed what emotion they were feeling.

Confusion.

Ooh-ggi-ggi! Ggi-ggi!

It was as if they weren't satisfied with expressing their confusion with their actions. The 10 masked monsters let out a sharp cry. Their cries intermingled with each other to make a very unpleasant sound.

As if angered by this sound, the Frost Golem Snake opened its mouth wide towards the source of the sounds. White Frost exited from the Frost Golem Snake's mouth, and it brushed past the



monsters. The cold terror made the Masked Monster Orangutans shake in fear.

However, the Frost Golem weren't the ones to defeat the source of the noises. It was the Skeleton Knights and the Skeleton Warriors. The monsters were blocked off by the Frost Golem Snake, so they really were like mice trapped in a jar. The Skeleton Knights and Warriors ruthlessly cut down the monsters as Frost swirled around them.

Kah-ahng!

In the beginning, it sounded like steel clashing on steel.

Poohk!

However, it quickly turned into the sound of swords cutting through flesh. Winter arrived in the green forest, which was occupied by the Masked Monster Orangutans.

Suddenly, flame erupted from one side.

Hwah-roo-roo!

It was a Griffin. It had the body of a lion. It also possessed the head and wings of an eagle. The Fire Golem had changed into the Griffin, and it flapped its wing to fly in the air. It let out an enormous flame from its mouth as the forest was turned into a sea of flame.



Ggi-ee! Ggi-ee!

While the forest was burning up, the masked monsters shot spears and arrows toward the Griffin Fire Golem flying above their heads. The arrows and spears left clear wounds on the Golem's body, but fire quickly filled in the wounds.

The anger expressed by the monsters were egregiously futile.

While the monsters were focused on the Griffin Fire Golem, the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors quickly infiltrated the burning forest. They were small, but in certain aspects, they were as scary as the Skeleton Knights. The burning forest completely erased their presence.

They moved towards the Masked Monster Orangutans like assassins, and the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors targeted the lower half of the monsters.

Thighs were stabbed. Their knees were cut and their calves were severed.

When their legs were attacked, the Masked Monster Orangutans fell in place. Two or three Mini Ogre equipped with level 190 Unique weapons fell on the monsters. These weapons were too expensive for most normal Users to purchase. These weapons started hacking the fallen monsters into pieces.



Ggi-ee! Ggi-ee!

The sharp cries that had filled the forest was disappearing one by one.

However, in this battle, the largest curse wasn't the winter or the flames. It was the black fog that was filling this stage.

[The King Orangutan fell into lethargy.]

This monster was the king of the Masked Monster Orangutans. The King Orangutan was a level 240 middle boss.

In truth, no Users had any informations regarding this monster. This was the only stage where the King Orangutan appeared. Moreover, it had been only four days since this Orangutan's Forest was found by a User.

When it became cursed, it started to pound its chest with its two hands like a gorilla.

[The King Orangutan's Shout has chased the Curse away.]

It had nullified all Debuff type Skills, and this was also the first time this setting was revealed.



After gaining confidence, the monster unfurled its crouched body. It was also the first time anyone saw the 6 meter tall monster stand at full height.

‘Ok.’

Everything he was seeing now was new. However, Hyrkan wasn’t flustered.

‘I think I have a rough idea on what is going on.’

It seemed he had figured out something. Hyrkan immediately gave the command for an attack to the waiting Death Knight. It was as if the Death Knight had been eagerly waiting for the signal. The Skeleton Steed let out its joy as it charged towards the King Orangutan.

Hyrkan was watching from 300 meters away, and he grabbed a Bone Spear. As he grabbed the Bone Spear, he immediately put a recovery Item within his mouth. It was very sour, and his tongue tingled. It was like the candy one ate on a dare.

Hyrkan furrowed his brow.

It was sour, but the effect was indisputable. His magical energy quickly climbed, and Hyrkan used the magical power to imbue a Curse on the Bone Spear.



On top of everything, this Bone Spear wasn't made out a common Bone Ingredient. It was a Bone Spear made using a level 190 Boss Monster as ingredient.

It was incredibly powerful, and it was expensive.

He was burning money.

There was no other way to describe what he was doing, but he didn't worry about the monetary part of the game.

He didn't let it linger in his mind.

He only focused on the battle.

'There is no cool time to the Dispel skill, and it can be used in an unlimited fashion. However, it has to pound its chest every time it wants to use the Skill.'

King Orangutan.

As mentioned before, this monster had never been revealed to the world yet. Hyrkan was the first to discover this monster.

Even if Hyrkan combined his current experience with his past memories, he had never seen this monster in Warlord.



This was a natural course of events. From now on, Hyrkan would experience things he had never experienced before.

However, Hyrkan wasn't flustered by it. There was no reason to be flustered.

‘I just have to stop it from pounding its chest.’

Hyrkan had experienced too much to be taken aback by anything.

He proved that his determined attitude wasn't a bluff when the Death Knight and the King Orangutan started to fight. Hyrkan took the situation into his own hands.

The battlefield was loud. It was like trying to make a phone call in a very noisy rock concert. It was an annoying environment, yet Hyrkan's concentration allowed him to hit the bullseye. It hadn't been a short distance. Hyrkan's spear flew 300 meters before it was embedded in the King Orangutan's body.

[King Orangutan was hit with the Sloth Curse.]

[Curse Infection was activated on the King Orangutan. The curse has spread to the surrounding.]

As predicted, the King Orangutan couldn't dispel the curse. The Death Knight didn't give it time to pound its chest.



At that moment...

[Your Level has increased.]

The Level Announcement that notified Hyrkan reaching a higher level of 220 was heard.

2.

[Hyrkan]

– Level : 220

– Class : Lich

– Title : 227

– Stats :

Strength(2855)/Stamina(1855)/Intelligence(1952)/Magic Power(2222)

– In possession of the Ancient Power of ‘Frost’

“Ah.”

Level 220.

Even he thought his Level Up pace was ridiculous, yet Hyrkan had an unsatisfied expression on his face. There was an expression



filled with worry behind the Hahoe Mask. He wasn't worried about his Levels, Stats, Item setting and the current hunting speed. There was no way these issues would worry him. Instead, he was thrilled about those aspects of the game. Before he had returned to the past, he had dreamed about hunting this way.

‘Do I really have to go back?’

If looked in a certain way, his progress was the root of his worry.

‘Ah. This is driving me crazy.’

He was doing too well.

Hyrkan wanted to maintain his Level Up pace. Most Users dreamed about hunting like him. He had the best Item setting, and he didn't need to hold back in using recovery Items. Moreover, he didn't have to worry about gathering crap items, since he was financially well off. He was basically monopolizing a hunting ground, and his Level Up pace matched what he experienced when his level was in double figures.

If he hated this, he shouldn't be playing this game.

However, he had reached a point where he had to clean up the loose threads. He was already level 220. After passing the level 200 mark, he had never visited the Class Tower yet.

‘I have to receive the Quests, and I have to learn new Skills.... At



the very least, I have to visit the Class Tower....’

The problem was the fact that he had to cross over the Urugal mountain range to consolidate these loose ends.

Currently, the only rest place in the Black Continent was the town near the Heard Fortress ruin. The Heard Fortress town was getting bigger by the day, but it would take a long time for a Class Tower to be erected.

He had already anticipated the problem. In the past, the most annoying part of operating in the Black Continent was the travel.

This was why he had refused to go back at level 210. He promised himself that he would go to the Class Tower when he was level 220.

‘Still, the [Steel Golem] will surely be of help to me. I’ve also gained enough Skill Rank to acquire [Curse Shower].’

It was time for him to make good on his promise. If he kept pushing back a promise he had made to himself, he might die later on, because he lacked certain Skills. It would be better for him to go than regretting his inaction in death.

Moreover, there was no actual downside in going to the Class Tower for Hyrkan. Instead, he would gain a lot by going there.

There was only upsides to obtaining the [Steel Golem] Skill.



There was no way he would suffer a loss.

The Skill allowed him to summon an Iron Golem, and its usefulness was beyond description. Its best attribute was defense. Its defense couldn't be compared to the defense of the Earth Golem and the Frost Golem.

If he used the Clay Play skill to borrow the Spec of a monster with great defense, he could use Hardening to create a massive shield.

Then there was the romantic in him, who wanted to obtain it.

‘I want to mount Skeleton Magicians on the Iron Golem like Rich Lich....’

Rich Lich had used a combination of the Iron Golem and the Skeleton Magicians. The Iron Golem was like a moving castle wall, and it defended the Skeleton Magicians. The Skeleton Magicians let out a continuous barrage of magic behind this protection.

On top of it all, the fact that he would have 3 Golems was incredible in itself.

He'll be able to defend attacks from three sides.

Currently, the Golem were mainly used in two ways. The Earth Golem was used to block the road, and the Fire Golem was used to gather the monsters.



Since most monsters couldn't outnumber him anymore, Hyrkan was able to use this method.

This method was even effective against the Boss Monsters.

In such a situation, what would happen if the Iron Golem appeared to close the third side?

It would create a stage. It was a perfect stage where the Death Knight could go nuts!

Moreover, the [Curse Shower] was a very good skill. The Skill allowed a shower to fall, which could give Curse Effect to his enemies. It was an AOE Curse Skill. Recently, his Curse Skill proficiency reached a point where he would be able to learn this skill.

If he gained these Skills, he would basically achieve another Spec Up.

Moreover, the enemies he had to fight weren't merely monsters.

'There's the Five Star bastards. Moreover, the Stormhunters have gone through a significant Spec Up.'

The Five Stars and the Stormhunters were also operating out of the Black Continent. They weren't as fast as Hyrkan, but they were



quickly increasing their Specs. They were quickly handing out Unique and Rare Rank level 200 Items to their members.

On the other hand, Hyrkan's Item setting had remained the same. He couldn't Spec Up. There were no Items better than the ones he was wearing right now. This was the price of being one of the leaders in this race.

In such a situation, there was no better way to Spec Up than to learn a free Skill from the Class Tower.

‘Recently, the traffic around the Voodook's tunnel has lessened, but.... If it comes to it, I could join a party as a third wheel.’

The current situation at the Voodook's Tunnel was added to his list of worries.

‘I have no choice.’

3.

‘Maybe I should have crossed over by dying? It took me 2 days to get here, and it'll take me two days to... Shit. If I could fly over the Urugal mountain range using the Wyvern Golem, I could do a round trip in one day. I have a mount I could ride, but the game mechanic won't allow me to fly it. Fuck this game.’

After obtaining his Skills from the Class Tower, he quickly moved his feet as he looked at the Skill descriptions.



Every second felt wasteful to him. Hyrkan didn't bother hiding his identity as he descended the Class Tower. When he exited, there was a significant amount of attention directed towards him, but he was indifferent to it. Even if a User came up to him to ask for a screenshot, he planned on tripping the User and running away.

However, the one to stop his hurried steps wasn't a User. It was a NPC.

"I have a letter for the disciple of Ahimbree-nim. It is addressed to Hyrkan-nim."

He had received a letter.

If the NPC had said it was just a letter, it wouldn't have been able to stop Hyrkan's steps. The problem was the person, who had sent it.

'Ahimbree?'

Aside from the nickname of Rich Lich attributed to Hyrkan by the Users, he had a lot of Titles within this game. Arbiter of Corruption, Hero of the Hiban Kingdom.... If this was really a fantasy world, he would have a hard time hearing his name mentioned, because he had too many titles.

The title mentioned right now was Disciple of Ahimbree. It was a



Title he had earned a long time ago, and it had almost faded into his memories. Hyrkan tilted his head in confusion, then he became delighted by the news.

‘I’m sure Ahimbree gave Skill Book Quests after lvl 200. Could it be?’

This morsel was delicious enough to stop him in his tracks.

“Who sent me this letter?”

Hyrkan immediately became courteous, and he treated the NPC with more respect.

“It is from Ahimbree-nim. He personally left it here. He left instructions for me to deliver it when I see his disciples.”

Hyrkan smiled.

‘I keep hitting the jackpot.’

4.

“Did you hear the news?”

Sohank shrugged his shoulders at Natal’s question.



It was a gesture that said, ‘What the hell are you talking about?’

“I’m talking about our take over.”

“Ah. You mean the Fighters guild?”

Sohank continued to speak as if the news wasn’t noteworthy.

“It’s a good move. They have a lot of User good at fighting. Ah. I’m not saying our guys aren’t good at fighting....”

“I understand why we are taking over the Fighters guild. Still, I don’t get the reason why we have to be in such a rush. The First Head usually never fails to give us a heads up, and he almost never rushes any business dealings....”

Sohank patted Natal’s worried shoulders.

“At the very least, he isn’t messing up the deals. Don’t worry too much about it. Above all, we have another opportunity thanks to the First Head. As he had said before, we would have never gotten this opportunity if we hadn’t gambled everything in coming west.”

When he mentioned the opportunity, Natal nodded his head. However, his expression refused to relax.

“In truth, we had to do something if we want to go up against them.”



At Sohank's words, the two of them turned towards the large mountain range in the distance.

It happened at that moment.

“Sohank-nim! Let's fight once more!”

A carefree voice was heard coming from somewhere. When the source of the voice was located, one could see a User with his sword out. It was as if the User had readied himself for a battle. The two Users, who had been looking at the mountain range, looked at each other when they saw the new User.

Natal looked at this User with a very annoyed expression on his face.

“Kiyote!”

“Ah. It seems Natal-nim is here too. How are you doing?”

“Why do you keep making trouble for me.”

Kiyote.

He was a User, who had become incredibly famous through PVP. The love calls from the 30 great guilds had been sent his way for a long time. It was difficult to hit the jackpot through PVP, but at the



very least, you could get one's basic needs through this content.

This was why everyone was surprised when they heard Kiyote had entered the Hydra guild.

First, Kiyote had ignored significant amount of contract fee in the past. He wasn't interested in money, and he hadn't been interested in the Hydra guild, since they didn't really deal with PVP contents. There was no common ground between the two parties.

This was why everyone was curious. Why did Kiyote enter into the Hydra guild? What did the Hydra guild use to entice this User?

“I made it clear when I entered the Hydra guild. I'm allowed to challenge anyone at any time for a PVP match unless there is an unavoidable engagement.”

This was the reason why he had joined.

The Hydra guild had drawn the line at not killing each other, but the Hydra guild agreed to let Kiyote challenge anyone to a PVP match if the situation allowed it.

There was no stronger Users than the ones in the 30 great guilds. This guild was filled with skilled Users.

His reputation took a bit of a hit when he was killed by the Killer Sinclair, but Sohank was still one of the top Strikers in Warlord.



From Kiyote's point of view, this was the most enticing reason that made him join this guild.

It was rare to be able to do PVP match with a skilled User, who represented one of the 30 great guilds.

In truth, Natal put up the most ferocious opposition to this deal. Natal had expressed his discontent regarding the deal when the Nine Heads had a meeting.

Sohank was their most important fighting power, and he didn't want Sohank to waste his time and effort in humoring Kiyote. Natal wouldn't stand for it.

However, in the end, the Hydra guild accepted Kiyote into their folds. It was passed through a vote of majority as 8 Heads agreed with the decision. When it was such a decisive vote, Natal had no choice, but to accept it.

“A deal is a deal.”

Unlike Natal, Sohank welcomed the addition of Kiyote.

“What conditions?”

“Let's fight with no Skills. You possess the power of Darkness, so how could I win against you in terms of Skills?”



“What about Items?”

“We’ll go with what we have on right now. A handicap of that level would spice up this fight.”

Sohank let out a smile. He actually welcomed Kiyote’s challenges. He was satisfied with Kiyote’s presence.

Natal shook his head from side to side as he looked at Sohank. The one, who welcomed Kiyote the most, was none other than Sohank. Sohank was called the most important fighting power amongst the 9 Heads, but it was probably hard being the only skilled User of his level in the guild.

In such a situation, it was imperative for them to add Users that didn’t fall below their expectations.

This made Natal think about another User.

‘If we are taking over the Fighters guild.... Will Whistling Pitbull be added to our ranks?’

Even the Fighters guild had a hard time dealing with the Whistling Pitbull. It boggled Natal’s mind that it would be his job to handle the Whistling Pitbull now.



## Chapter 166 – Trace Of Bokan (2)

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5.

[Quest ‘Trace of Bokan’ has started.]

When he read the entirety of the letter sent by Ahimbree, Hyrkan heard the System Announcement in his ears. A new Quest was added to his Quest List. Hyrkan immediately checked the content of the Quest.

[Trace of Bokan]

- Quest Rank : Unique
- Quest Level Range : 200
- Quest Content : The Archmage Bokan’s trace has been discovered. Currently, the evidence is being kept by NPC Diung at the current Heard Fortress Ruin town. Please go find and investigate the trace of Bokan.
- Quest Reward : Skill Book.

‘Bokan....’

The letter from Ahimbree was very long-winded.



Blah blah.

There were so many words that it almost made him feel annoyed.

However, the content behind the words were very simple.

Archmage Boka was Ahimbree's teacher, and his trace was discovered in the Black Continent. Ahimbree wanted Hyrkan to find clues regarding Archmage Boka on his behalf.

The reward was a Skill Book.

At this point in the game, obtaining a Skill Book containing a level 200 and above Skill was like a pipe dream. It was something one couldn't acquire even if one had money. Of course, his eyes spun from the implications. If it hadn't been for Boka's name, he would have committed to this Quest as if his life was depended on it.

Basically, the name Boka made him mull over his decision.

‘.....what was his role again?’

Archmage Boka.

This NPC had seven disciples including Ahimbree. When one progressed in the Main Scenario Quest, one could hear his name mentioned occasionally.



If one put together all the information regarding Bokan, one could deduce that Bokan was someone, who had predicted the grave danger being faced by the world of Warlord right now. One could also surmise that he was someone, who had actively fought against this threat.

This theory was confirmed when his name appeared in the Immoral Prince storyline.

If one looked at the background lore, Archmage Bokan was the one, who had named the Immoral Prince. Bokan had hoped the prince would drive out the coming nightmares with the faithfuls, so Bokan had named him Dean.

An information of this level wasn't a secret. It basically put a big importance on Bokan's existence.

Hyrkan was well aware of this fact.

'Did Bokan ever appear in the Ruined Kingdom episode?'

To his knowledge, Archmage Bokan had never appeared in the Ruined Kingdom episode.

Before he returned to the past, Hyrkan hadn't been able to influence how the Main Scenario Quest developed. He only had enough potential and power to carry out an already developed Main Scenario Quest. The trajectory of the Main Scenario Quest



had been set, yet he had led the Hahoe Mask guild into attempting a fair amount of Main Scenario Quests.

This was also why he had been more attentive regarding the current Main Scenario Quest than the previous two Episodes. He had read all the Quest related guides. It was so well researched that these text were basically like dissertation papers. He memorized the important words, terminologies and english terms related to this episode. He also watched the Main Scenario Quest related videos broadcasted by the 30 great guilds. He had watched it as if was watching lectures over the internet.

However, there had been no mention of the Archmage Bokan within Hyrkan's memories. This character hadn't been present in the Ruined Kingdom episode.

‘There were several Quests given by Ahimbree, which was linked to the Ruined Kingdom episode. Those Quests also gave Skill Books, but I don't remember a Quest that directly dealt with Bokan.’

Of course, the Quest Routes had already changed. Events that should have happened in the Ruined Kingdom episode occurred prior to the start of the episode. The Mythos Rank Ancient Powers and Anugas had already appeared.

Simply, the Quest timeline had been accelerated. The Rewards that should be appearing later in the game was coming out now.

The problem was the fact that Archmage Bokan hadn't appeared



even at the end of the Ruined Kingdom episode. This meant that this content was from much further down in the story line.

‘It can’t be. Will the Dragons come out at this point in the game?’

Hyrkan’s expression hardened a little bit more as he stared at the Quest Window.

6.

“Thank you very much.”

“Yes.”

“You were awesome.”

“Yes. Yes.”

“It was my privilege to have met you!”

“Yes. Yes. Yes.”

A party exited the Voodook’s Tunnel exit, and there was a restless atmosphere around them.

At this point in the game, it was a given the Users would be coming out of the Voodook’s Tunnel. It was a boring and common



occurrence. This was why the Users resting nearby or the Users waiting for their party members barely paid attention to who came out of the tunnel. They would glance sideways at the exit, but that was the extent to their interest.

However, this party was different. There was an excited atmosphere being permeated by the group, and their restless nature drew the eyes of the surrounding Users.

The interested Users quickly saw the reason behind the hubbub.

“Hahoe Mask?”

“Is that the Hahoe Mask?”

It was the Hahoe Mask.

If one made a list ranking the Users, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say the Hahoe Mask was the strongest and the best User in Warlord.

The party's atmosphere started to infect the atmosphere as the Users in the surrounding became excited.

When the Users, who travelled across the Voodook's Tunnel with Hyrkan, asked for a favor, he agreed to it.

“Excuse me. Do you think I can take a screenshot with you?”



“I would like to ask you for one too.”

“All right. Just don’t put your hands on my shoulders.”

“What?”

“I’m playing with you. Shall I give you a kimchi or a cheese?”

“Please say cheese.”

“I hope you won’t cuss me out or say I don’t have any manners after uploading the picture.”

“I would never do that.”

“I heard your manners are excellent!”

At Hyrkan’s assent, the six Users squeezed in together, and each of them took a screenshot. In the process, Hyrkan rewarded them by making the peace sign.

Several Users thought it was ridiculous, but the others looked on with jealousy.

Hyrkan had to cross the Urugal great mountain range as soon as possible, so he chose to become a third wheel. He inserted himself



into a party that was getting ready to go into the Voodook's Tunnel.

It hadn't been hard. It would have been impossible if he had been some other User.

However, wasn't he THE Hahoe Mask?

The EXP the party would get would be the same, and they would gain a memory they would be able to look back on. Moreover, they were getting the sweet side of the deal, so no party would turn down an opportunity to add the Hahoe Mask to their party.

After his follow-up service, Hyrkan immediately headed towards the top of the Urugal mountain range.

There were a good number of Users on the road he was on, and when they discovered Hyrkan, an unsettled atmosphere developed. There looked to be enemies amongst the Users, but no one acted against him.

Hyrkan was satisfied with the situation.

'This is no downside in being popular.'

There were people, who hated being famous. He wasn't like that. Hyrkan was the opposite. If he hated being popular, he wouldn't be playing this game for a living.



Hyrkan liked being famous.

He also enjoyed the benefit of being a popular public figure.

Hyrkan had a refreshing smile on his face as he crossed the Urugal mountain range.

He once again came face to face with the Black Continent. When he saw the endless stretch of land, his smile was erased from his face.

While Hyrkan traveled to the Class Tower to earn his Skills, the situation on the Black Continent continued to move in a fluid manner.

This was especially true after the Heard Fortress town was formed. The Users were less cautious in their actions. The results created by Users, who were willing to put themselves at risk, was terrifying. It would give game developers nightmares.

At times, these kinds of Users were able to create unimaginable progress.

It was like that right now.

With the Urugal mountain as the starting point, the Users were expanding to the east, north and south.



The traces of the Ruined Kingdom was found, and the Users were combing through the Ruins. The secret behind the fall of the Ruined Kingdom was revealed, and the Users dreamed about becoming strong by finding the power left behind the Ruined Kingdom.

‘The Stormhunters are going east.’

Amongst all of them, the ones with the most eye popping results was the Stormhunters guild.

East Rush!

The Stormhunters guild had gathered all their resources, and they were on an endless rush to the east.

He had characterized it as a rush, but in reality, the more apt description was a runaway train.

‘I was right. Che-sulyun is a crazy bitch.’

Even amongst the Stormhunters guild, there was a hint of madness in Che-sulyun’s exploits. Che-sulyun had perfected the use of the power of fire.

Would she be able to continue using the nickname Storm Queen? It made people ponder over the subject.



Moreover, the Stormhunters guild were the most reckless with their lives amongst the Users in the Black Continent. Every live broadcast had two to three Users dying.

They died, but at the same time, they achieved results that were well worth their lost lives. After finding the Balos ruins inside the Olbrid Forest, the Stormhunters guild had already found 2 additional Ruins. They were the first ones to find three Ruins.

When one found a normal Ruin for the first time, one could gain around three to five Transcendent Ancient Power. At the very least, one Mythos Rank power should have appeared.

The Mythos rank Ancient Power was suddenly unleashed, because of Hyrkan. However, even the Legendary Rank Ancient Power was incredibly useful.

Basically, if they were able to be the first ones to find the Ruins, they would be able rapidly increase the power of the entire guild. This was the most surefire way.

‘The Five Star bastards are going north and south.’

The Five Stars weren’t also playing around.

Their reputation had bottomed out when they got punched by the Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters guild. However, they had the ability to recover from such damage. In the end, the fact that



they were the biggest force within the Black Continent hadn't changed.

The Five star were using their forces to expand their territories to the north and south. Their moves were validated when they eventually found four ruins.

‘The Poker teams are extraordinary.’

Of course, their activities centered around the Poker teams. The Poker teams were exposed as being very powerful when they faced down powerful monsters without much problem.

‘No matter where I go I'll be treated like an uninvited guest.’

From now on, Hyrkan had to commit himself to a direction.

If he learned the evidence about Archmage Boka at the Heard Fortress ruin, he'll probably be sent to one of three directions.

‘All right.’

For a moment, Hyrkan's expression relaxed a little bit. He relaxed it by force. The ones that would weep would be the ones that would have to face him. He tried to make his thoughts into reality.



When the Users saw the Hahoe Mask, they had two types of reaction.

“Uh? It’s the Hahoe Mask!”

The first reaction was surprise.

“Is it really the Hahoe Mask?”

The other reaction was suspicion.

However, this was the Heard Fortress. The Users, who reached the neutral zone inside the Black Continent, felt surprise more so than suspicion.

These Users had finished their 2nd Advancement. There was no reason why they would feel the need to pull pranks by wearing a Hahoe Mask in the Black Continent.

This was the reasoning behind their reactions.

“Wow. The mood is quite serious.”

“Are they going to fight”

“What reason do they have to fight?”



“Still, you never know. It isn’t as if the Hahoe Mask has officially allied himself with the 30 great guilds.”

When Hyrkan appeared at the Heard Fortress Ruin town, the Users assumed he was the real deal.

This was why they were looking forward to the meeting in front of them.

‘I never expected the Hydra guild to be here.’

Hydra guild members had surprised the Users by arriving at the Heard Fortress Ruin town. They had arrived a little bit earlier than the Hahoe Mask.

The Users in the surrounding wanted to see what kind of chemical reaction would occur when the two sides met!

Of course, Hyrkan didn’t really want to meet the Hydra guild. He had maintained a neutral relationship with the Hydra guild after the Immoral Prince episode, but it wasn’t as if they had a cordial relationship. Moreover, Hyrkan considered the relationship to be closer to being bad after what happened at the Frozen land.

On the other hand, the Hydra guild had sought Hyrkan out.

“This is our first meeting since we met at the Frozen land.”



It was Sohank and Natal. The two of them had taken off their helmets, and they had approached the Hahoe Mask. There was only one additional User alongside these two. The rest of the Hydra guild members were out of sight.

It was a silent gesture, which indicated that they didn't want to fight with the Hahoe Mask.

“What do you want with me?”

Hyrkan didn't show any signs of being happy at their appearance.

‘Huh?’

His eyes narrowed behind the Hahoe Mask. It was the familiar faces of Natal and Sohank. Moreover, the User between them also looked familiar.

Hyrkan eventually figured it out.

“Kiyote?”

“Wow. You remembered me.”

Kiyote reacted as if he had been waiting to hear those words. Kiyote stepped forward. He left behind Natal and Sohank to stand



in front of Hyrkan.

“Yes. I’m Kiyote.”

“You are affiliated with the Hydra guild now?”

“Yes. That isn’t important. Do you remember that I still possess the right to challenge you once more?”

Instead of answering him, Hyrkan smirked. Of course, he remembered it. At the time, he had received the really expensive Orc Hero’s Sword from him.

That sword had been a great deal of help to him.

“So you want to use your challenge rights right now?”

“No. There is an opponent I have to beat before I can fight you. Ah. I wanted to say I’m making great use of the tactic I learned from you.”

As he spoke, Kiyote moved his arms. He made a gesture as if he was throwing something grasped in his hand.

Sand Toss.

Recently, he hadn’t felt the need to use such tactics. In the past, it



was a tactic he used to great effect in PKs and PVPs.

If one fell for such a trick, it usually became a stuff of nightmare. It was rare for someone to bite that very same move for one's own use.

Hyrkan thought Kiyote was refreshing in many ways.

Sohank had a merry smile as he looked at Kiyote. Kiyote was acting as he liked. His courage and single mindedness was something that couldn't be learned over time by working on it.

On the other hand, Natal's face was distorted by anger. The Hahoe Mask had to be treated with special care. One had to be very careful when speaking to him, yet Kiyote talked about challenging him?

What nonsense.

It would be the end of them if the Hahoe Mask used the challenge as a pretext to declare a war on their guild.

In the end, Natal pulled at Kiyote's shoulder.

"Mr. Kiyote. I want you to keep to the promise you made."

"Ah!"



Kiyote finally backed off.

“I’m sorry. I really never expected the Hahoe Mask to remember my name.”

Originally, Kiyote hadn’t been scheduled to come with them. It had been decided that only Natal and Sohank would go to speak with the Hahoe Mask. However, Kiyote had decided to butt in. Kiyote said that he had met the Hahoe Mask before, and he had an abnormal relationship with the Hahoe Mask.

Kiyote had said that he suffered a loss to the Hahoe Mask, and he would be able to challenge the Hahoe Mask once.

This was why Natal had made Kiyote make a promise with him. If the Hahoe Mask didn’t recognize him, he had to shut his mouth. Even if he was recognized, he was instructed to speak briefly. Natal had told him to keep the conversation to a short greeting.

Kiyote retreated, and Natal stood in front of the Hahoe Mask.

Hyrkan spoke to Natal first.

“I know we didn’t have any direct confrontations on Frozen land. Still, if you harbor ill will towards me, shall we resolve our grievances right now?”

“Let us make a gentleman’s agreement.”



Natal spoke immediately after Hyrkan's words ended.

"I have no plans on allying myself with you."

"We feel the same way. However, there is no reason why we should maul each other. That will only make our competitors happy."

Instead of answering, Hyrkan looked at Sohank. Sohank didn't look away from Hyrkan's gaze.

Come at me if you dare!

'It is as the rumor said. He must have earned the Ancient Power of Darkness.'

Sohank's confidence was not rooted in his Items or Level. He was also much inferior in terms of skills.

This meant he possessed some other power.

'The game is really pouring out all the Mythos Rank Ancient Power. Originally, it was a power given, so one could fight against the Dragon's army. However, every tom, dick and harry has it now...'

Hyrkan made invidious remarks inside, and he quickly weighed



the possibilities.

A gentleman's agreement was something he had wanted. Hyrkan also didn't want to make enemy of a User with a Mythos Rank Ancient Power.

However, he couldn't show any weakness here. If he did, he would be entering into a losing proposition.

"All right. We don't have to get into unnecessary dog fights. So which way are you going? Are you going north, east or south?"

Natal steadily looked at Hyrkan when Natal heard his words.

'If our paths coincide, is he saying he'll ignore the gentleman's agreement? Is that what he is trying to say?'

Natal considered Hyrkan's words to be a warning. It was a warning that said the Hydras guild would have to pay the cost if they really wanted this deal.

If one considered the Hydra guild's reputation, those terms were a nonstarter.

"Which way are you going?"

"I'll know after I get my Quest. If you don't want to tell me, you don't have to."



Chul-kuhk!

He said it was fine with his words, but Hyrkan touched the sword sheathe on his waist. Of course, it was a threat. The threat implied that they'll hear the sound of his sword if they refused to give him an answer.

Normally, such tactics were Useless against the Hydra guild, but it was an entirely different story with the Hahoe Mask.

‘Shit. He is domineering. If I could do such feats by myself... I would also act like that.’

Natal became troubled.

“He is in a difficult spot. He cannot tell you our secrets.”

Sohank, who hadn't spoke until now, resolved Natal's dilemma.

“Please be understanding. You should consider what the Hydra guild specializes in. We have no choice.”

“If you don't want to tell me, then you don't have to. Someone might think I had threatened you judging by your words.”

When Sohank stepped forward, the Hahoe Mask shrugged his shoulders, and he turned his back towards them. There was no



reason to continue this conversation.

When the Hahoe Mask left, Natal spoke to Sohank.

“Thanks to you I was able to gain some breathing room.”

“That is my role. Anyways, we were able to confirm something. The Hahoe Mask has no allies in the Black Continent.”

Natal nodded his head.

There were two reasons why they had sought out the Hahoe Mask. The first reason was straightforward. They wanted a gentleman's agreement where they'll be able to avoid unnecessary fights. The other reason was to assess Hahoe Mask's current condition.

There was a hidden benefactor behind the Hahoe Mask. If the Hahoe Mask's benefactor had the means to actively help the Hahoe Mask through troops, the Hahoe Mask wouldn't have backed off right now.

However, in the recent days, he had been helped by the Stormhunters guild when facing the Five Stars. If one looked at his recent activities, it seemed he wanted to solve his own problems instead of waiting for some other power to come in and help him.

Of course, the brief conversation today didn't make them 100 percent confident in their theory. However, one needed a



suspicion before one could come up with a hypothesis. Afterwards, evidence had to be gathered to prove the hypothesis. Then one would be able to prove that the suspicion was right.

After hearing the conversation between the two, Kiyote spoke up.

“What will happen if I challenge and win against the Hahoe Mask? What would be my rank? Will I be able to become the 10th Head?”

Sohank and Natal had been having a serious conversation, but the cat got their tongue when they heard Kiyote’s words.



## Chapter 167 – Trace Of Bokan (3)

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8.

The Heard Fortress Ruin town grew by the day. A castle wall grew taller each day as if it was a bamboo tree in growth. Of course, houses made out of logs and brick were erected beyond the castle walls.

They sprung up everywhere.

Amongst all of them, the most eye-catching building was the one built out of bricks. The construction of the building was almost completed. It was the Heard Fortress Ruin branch of the Subjugation Association. It was 5 stories high, and it was also the largest building in terms of width.

Moreover, it had the most Users within the building.

“Move it! Let me get some Quests!”

“Is there anyone willing to hunt with me? I’m looking for a Striker!”

“Hey! Over here! Look here! Over here!”

This was the only way station in the Black Continent, so of course, it had a lot of people. Moreover, when people gathered, a



marketplace always popped up.

The Users here had all gone through their 2nd Advancement. Their Levels and Items would have brought admiring gazes to themselves if it was anywhere else, but here. It didn't work like that over here. There were too many monsters here with high levels and great items to be boastful.

Moreover, a real monster had appeared inside the town.

‘It's the Hahoe Mask.’

‘The Hahoe Mask really came.’

‘Since he came here, I'm guessing he is here for a Quest. I heard he crossed the Urugal mountain range again.’

‘If he suffered a Game Over, he would have been summoned here. There's no other reason why he would have crossed the Urugal mountain range.’

‘It was the same with the Immoral Prince episode, and the the Frozen Kingdom episode. We have to follow after the Hahoe Mask.’

Hahoe Mask.

The fact that he had arrived at the Heard Fortress Ruin town



wasn't just spread to the Users. It was spread so far that people, who didn't play Warlord, was aware of this fact.

Moreover, the fact that the Hahoe Mask sought out the branch of the Subjugation Association meant that he had business here.

The Hahoe Mask wasn't just a skilled User. He was like a magnet that pulled along the flow of Warlord.

The Subjugation Association was where one could receive a Quest. His appearance at this location meant that the Hahoe Mask was on a Quest. Of course, there was no way it was a normal Quest. When the Hahoe Mask entered the branch office of the Subjugation Association, he didn't stay on the first floor where the normal Quests were processed. A guard guided the Hahoe Mask upstairs, and the rumor of this incident started to spread. The expressions on the Users near the Subjugation Association changed.

9.

NPC Diung was a young man with a face full of scars. The NPC was young yet he had scars. These two elements usually didn't go hand in hand with each other.

The NPC took out a pouch made out of rags.

“This is the Item I found recently.”



NPC Diung handed over the pouch to the User wearing the Hahoe Mask.

Hyrkan immediately opened the pouch, and he took out the item.

‘As expected, it is a Conch.’

The pouch held a Conch, which gave off a yellow gleam. It was metallic, and it was similar in size to the Wooden Conch he had found in the Ruins. Its shape was also similar. Therefore, it was easy to figure out how to operate the Golden Conch.

Hyrkan immediately pressed the Golden Conch to his ears.

Instead of the relaxing sounds of waves, a voice could be heard.

– My name is Bokan. I’m at a tomb. It is the grave of some unknown person, and I was able to witness the Power of Corruption here. This is why I’m leaving behind a record.

The voice sounded dry. It was hard to determine the age of the speaker by listening to its voice, and there were static included with the message. If he didn’t concentrate, he wouldn’t be able to differentiate between the voice and the background static.

At the same time, the message was short.



Hyrkan waited to hear more of story, but there was no followup message.

‘This game is really too much.’

Basically, that was all the information he would get.

It had introduced itself as Bokan. It had revealed where it was at by saying it was at a grave. Then it spoke about the result of its action by mentioning its sighting of the Power of Corruption.

‘I have to find the location using just this information?’

Hyrkan would have to find the trace of Bokan using this clue. When he arrived at a predetermined destination, the Golden Conch would give him a new clue. This was the most common way the Users progressed in a Quest within the Ruined Kingdom Episode.

‘So stingy. Couldn’t they have been a little bit more free in giving out information?’

Hyrkan harbored a brief feeling of discontent, but he didn’t let it progress any further. Nothing would change if he dwelled on his frustration. Hyrkan was well aware of this fact.

“So where did you find it?”



Anyways, the starting point would always be where the Item was found. He just had to find the next path from there.

“I found it at the Balos ruins.”

Balos ruins was the location discovered by the Stormhunters guild.

‘In the end, I have to head east?’

It seemed Hyrkan’s fate was closely intertwined with the Stormhunters guild.

‘A tomb.....’

Hyrkan knew that the word, ‘tomb’, appeared a lot in the Ruined Kingdom. There were a lot of locations that started or ended with tomb. As the word indicated, the Ruined Kingdom had been a nation. During the kingdom’s era of prosperity, kings and other important figures were buried in tombs, and these tombs were usually filled with Items.

Wouldn’t a tomb be called a ruin if it was big enough?

‘East.... It would be a jackpot if I find the King’s Tomb.’

Of course, if the King’s Tomb was found, it would be a jackpot for



him. At the very least, he would be able to gain two scrolls of Legendary Rank Ancient Power. If he was lucky, he would be able to obtain an amazing Item. Even if it was a lesser tomb, there should be multiple Items within it.

Of course, these tombs were difficult. If one found the tomb of a famous king, one would have to fight a monster that was as strong as the Boss Monster guarding the peak of the Urugal mountain range. An exciting clash against the guardians of the tombs would be waiting for the Users.

‘Let’s look at this in a positive light.’

Hyrkan systematically listed the important facts. East would be preferable than going to the north or the south. Hyrkan and the Stormhunters guild could fight until their faces were red if they wanted to, but an excuse would be needed to start the feud. However, the Five Stars guild didn’t need any pretext. They would try to kill Hyrkan on sight.

“Was there any other clues left behind.”

“None. This item was by itself in the middle of a room.”

“All right. Good job.”

Hyrkan was about to leave. Since he had nothing to gain here, why should he stay any longer?



“Ah. Also...”

Hyrkan was about to walk away when NPC Diung stopped him.

“In the near future, the Hiban kingdom will dispatch an order of knights here. I believe you deserve to know this, Hyrkan-nim. It’ll happen in secret, so please don’t tell anyone else about this.”

“Really?”

Hyrkan tilted his head.

The word, ‘order of knights’, wasn’t a bad thing in itself.

The problem arose in Hyrkan’s memories regarding the order of knights and the Ruined Kingdom. He knew what came out when these two elements were mixed.

“Which order of knights....”

“I cannot tell you any more than that. However, the Hiban kingdom decided this fallen kingdom needed a closer examination. They will be here on orders.”

“Thank you for informing me.”

“Then I’ll pray for your success. Please find the whereabouts of



our Archmage.”

After nodding his head, Hyrkan exited the room. However, Hyrkan’s thoughts weren’t filled with information regarding the Archmage Bokan.

‘Are the Steel Lion Knights heading this way? Was the Barbarian King event already triggered?’

Black Continent.... Before Hyrkan returned to the past, the Ruined Kingdom was called the Lost World, and several troops of knights had appeared there. Of course, they appeared for Quests and events. They would never appear randomly to take down a monster.

Moreover, the appearance of the Steel Lion Knights and the Barbarian King event was an integral part of the Ruined Kingdom episode.

It was akin to the great battle. The Steel Lion Knights would start to operate within the Black Continent with great success, and they would eventually awaken the Barbarian King. From that point on, the Users would have to fight against the Barbarian King. The Barbarian King had a special characteristic of being able use all monsters as vassals. Its power was selected to be akin to the Power of Corruption.

If things ended there, it wouldn’t be a problem. The problem was the regions surrounding the Barbarian King. In the regions near the Boss monster, the Regeneration time and number changed.



Basically, the Barbarian King made all monsters its subordinates. To satisfy this setting, the nearby hunting grounds became empty as they gathered beneath the Barbarian King.

Basically, the Users, who frequently hunted in the Black Continent, would be forced to take down the Barbarian King.

At the time, Tobot Soft took a lot of heat as swear words automatically came out of the Users. However, the developers hid behind the excuse that they didn't have the ability to arbitrarily change the game. The AI made the decision on how the events developed in Warlord, and they no longer interfered with the system on the development side.

‘No way. The Barbarian King is suppose to come out at the latter stages of the Ruined Kingdom episode.’

When the Barbarian King was taken down, the Users find out why the Ruined Kingdom collapsed. Then there was the power left behind by the Ruined Kingdom. It was made, so the Users could avenge the Ruined Kingdom by fighting the beings that caused their collapse. This was when the beings that drove the Kingdom to ruins was revealed.

This was the starting point of the Dragon's Army episode.

‘There is no way that'll occur.’



The Ruined Kingdom episode had just started, so there was no way the signs regarding the Dragon's Army would show up.

Hyrkan let out a bitter laugh as he lightly shook his head from side to side.

‘There is no way the high and mighty AI could made such a mistake.’

After descending the stairway, Hyrkan left the Subjugation Association.

10.

A person didn't change. It didn't matter if a User was level 1, level 100 or level 200. In the end, Users were humans. In the end, the bad apple will continue to be a bad apple, and the cheaters will always cheat.

Of course, the schemers will continue to scheme.

When one continue to scheme, there would always be a day of reckoning.

“Let's do this!”

Five Users were about to pay the price for playing games.



“I purposefully moved in a circuitous route, and I passed by this location not too long ago. Look here. I clearly left behind this scratch when I walked past this tree.”

He looked at the Users, who would be forced to pay a price.

“We....”

“So you are trying to say you guys were coincidentally taking the same route as me. Stop lying.”

The User’s name was Hyrkan, and his nickname was the Hahoe Mask.

We was the most famous User in Warlord, and one must never make an enemy out of him.

“What is your affiliation? V&V? Big Smiles?”

These five Users had been tailing after the Hahoe Mask.

It happened quite often. When a User received an important Quest from the Subjugation Association, one basically had the spoon half way up to one’s mouth. The one raising the spoon was the target, and if the owner of the Quest could be eliminated, the Quest Reward could be taken by someone else.

Then there were the Users, who interfered with the progress of



an opponent's Quest.

Of course, the User suffering these kinds of schemes had the right to lash out.

The Hahoe Mask would be in the right even if he killed the five Users tailing him.

“Run!”

The five Users made the wise choice. If their opponent wasn't Hyrkan, this plan would have worked.

Chul-kuhk, chul-kuhk!

However, this was the Hahoe Mask. He controlled over 60 Skeletons, and a loose retreat wasn't a wise choice.

Before the five Users had been aware of it, the Skeleton Warriors had already created a perimeter around them. They blocked the Users from escaping.

The five Users had planned on simultaneously running in different directions. The five Users once again looked at Hyrkan.

Hyrkan met their gazes as he spoke.



“The five of you can fight against each other, and I’ll let the last surviving User live.”

At his words, two of the five Users sneered at him. The other three members flipped their middle fingers towards Hyrkan.

Hyrkan smiled as he flicked his finger.

11.

[The Hydra guild merged with the Fighters guild!]

[Hydra guild: “The Fighters guild is the strongest in terms of battle capability amongst the Underfoot guilds. We need them. They will supplement the part where the Hydra guild is weakest.”]

[Fighters guild: “We agreed to it the moment we received an offer from the Hydrda guild. Our merge will create the best synergistic effect.”]

[This is the first instance where an Underfoot guild merged with one of the 30 great guilds. Is this the start of a new reorganization of the power structure?]

Many articles were being written with titles saying the Hydra guild had merged with the Fighters guild. The news was being spread fast.



While the news was spreading, Eric Gomes had turned off his smartphone and every other forms of communication he possessed. He was listening to music.

It was a habit he developed long ago when he worked on Wall Street. If he succeeded, he would hit the jackpot. If he failed, he would go bankrupt.

He had made irrevocable decisions that could have led to either outcome, and when he made the decision, Eric Gomes cut himself off from the outside world. He realized that he could do nothing once he had the irrevocable decision.

It meant that the decision he had made recently was a decision in the same vein.

He always had thought about acquiring the Fighters guild. In truth, there wasn't much downside to the merge. The Fighters guild possessed Users with high combat ability. They would be able to fill Hydras's biggest need in one fell swoop.

Of course, the problem always came down to money. The Hydra guild wasn't the only ones, who had coveted the Fighters guild. In such a situation, there was no reason why the Fighters guild would lower their market value.

Basically, the acquisition had been an unreasonable bet. The Hydra guild had paid a heavy price.



‘Life is a funny thing. I can’t believe I made a decision like this, because of the Hungry man.’

The impetus behind such a bold bet was the Hungry man, Toby Gwynn.

He had suddenly contacted Eric Gomes, and he divulged information that hadn’t been released to the public.

When he heard the information, Eric Gomes understood the reasoning behind the actions taken by the Tobot Soft.

‘As always, success comes to those, who are prepared. The great success is reaped by those that are lucky.’

At the same time, Eric Gomes realized that he had no choice, but to stand with Toby Gwynn. The gains wanted by Toby Gwynn was in a similar direction to the gains wanted by Eric Gomes.

When he heard Toby Gwynn’s story, he immediately purchased the Fighters guild. He needed to take the initiative.

‘I have to see the big picture especially in times like this.’

This was a lesson he had learned while working at Wall Street for 10 years. The further you were away from where money was being traded, the opportunity to make money also disappeared. The funny part was the fact even if one distanced oneself from the market where money flowed back and forth, this didn’t mean the



opportunity to lose money went away too.

‘So the problem becomes the Hahoe Mask again?’

According to the information given to him by Toby Gwynn, the biggest problem right now was the Hahoe Mask.

A person working outside the standard structure would eventually wreck the structure.

‘He told me such precious information, because he expects me to block people like the Hahoe Mask and the Stormhunters guild from rocking the boat too much.’

Toby Gwynn had given the Hydras guild information, because it would be profitable for the Hydra guild to keep the Hahoe Mask in check.

It was a really hard task.

However, Eric Gomes thought of it in simple terms.

‘If I look at the most recent events... There is a good possibility that the Hahoe Mask doesn’t have a backer. Even if he had one, it isn’t a big organization.’

In the past, he had thought the Hahoe Mask was backed by an organization that rivaled the 30 great guilds in power.



However, Eric Gomes recently started to have doubts about this assumption. If the Hahoe Mask had backers, the forces behind him should have started their operation already unless they were stupid. Moreover, if they refused to reveal their identity up to now, they probably would refuse to reveal their identity in the future.

Basically, Hahoe Mask was by himself. He was a Solo Player. He played this game by himself.

Eric Gomes calibrated his thoughts based on this assumption.

‘Warlord isn’t a game one can solo. Up until now, the Hahoe Mask reaped the rewards by taking over tables that had already been set.’

In the Immoral Prince episode, it seemed as if the Hahoe Mask did everything by himself, but he had walked a road paved by countless number of dead Users. He only planted a flag on top of the peak.

Would the Hahoe Mask been able to stop the great battle by himself?

Even in the Argardo raid, could he have done it without the help from the Red Bulls guild?

In the recent Raid, he would have failed without the help of the



Stormhunters guild. The Five Stars would have shut him down if he hadn't had help.

This was the key point.

'We tried to use the Hahoe Mask, and the Hahoe Mask used us instead. I have to give up on the idea of using the Hahoe Mask. If I do so, only the disrupters would be left around the Hahoe Mask. In the end, the Hahoe Mask will come against a wall.'

The Hahoe Mask wouldn't be able to do this alone.

'If the Hahoe Mask is able to monopolize the content by himself...'

If he could do it without the help of others...

'Then his destiny was already set in stone by god.'

At that point, a destiny like that couldn't be dodged.



# Chapter 168 – King's Tomb (1)

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1.

The news of the the Hydra guild acquiring the Fighters guild was spread in an instant. It also created a big ripple in Warlord.

– Why did the Hydra guild suddenly merge with the Fighters guild?

– ⊥ They made the acquisition, because they needed the forces of the Fighters guild.

– Why does the Hydra guild suddenly need the Fighters guild's forces? What are they trying to do?

In the midst of the unrest, people started to figure out the reasons behind the merge. They deduced the reason why the Hydra guild had purchased the Fighters guild even at the expense of overpaying for the acquisition.

– They are basically signalling their intent on entering the Black Continent.

– ⊥ The original Hydra guild had enough firepower to enter the Black Continent. So why make this move?

– ⊥ Monsters aren't the only foes one has to face within the Black



Continent.

In a short amount of time, a majority of the people came to a consensus in regards to the reasoning behind the merge.

- The Black Continent is already occupied by the Five Stars guild and the Stormhunters guild. They are basically saying that they won't back down.

- ⊥ Will this be a start to a guild war?

- ⊥ Didn't they already fight with the Big Smiles guild in the Frozen Lands? They've already fought once, so there is no reason why they won't fight again.

- ⊥ However, the Big Smiles is part of the Five Stars now. Will the Hydra guild really try to start something with the Big Smiles?

- ⊥ This is why they acquired the Fighters guild!

- ⊥ Still, would the acquisition of the Fighters guild be enough? In my opinion, it would have been better to create an alliance with another guild.

- ⊥ The Hydra guild has a decent relationship with the Red Bulls. If they allied with each other on top of acquiring the Fighters guild... It might be possible.



Guild war.

This wasn't simply a fight between Users affiliated with a guild. It was a life-and-death fight where the guild's profit was put on the line as prize. Of course, when the Hydra guild enters the Black Continent, many predicted that it would signal the start of a guild war. It would be a battle between 30 great guilds that'll determine each guild's fate. Since the fate of a guild was on the line, it was predicted that it would be a battle amongst the most skilled Users, who represented the guilds. It would be like the fight between Sohank and Sinclair at the Frozen lands. The real pros would be fighting for their fame.

People expected it, and at the same time, they were looking forward to seeing it.

However, unlike the expectations held by the public, no full scale battles occurred.

When people realized that there wouldn't be any real clashes, everyone became disappointed. Ahn-jaehyun was one of the people, who was disappointed.

‘There's no special news today either.’

Ahn-jaehyun busily tapped at his Tablet PC, and he had on a sullen expression on his face.

‘In the end, did they decide to work with each other? From what



I saw, the Hydra guild and the Five Stars overlapped in their area of operation... Did they come to some kind of agreement?’

When the Hydra guild acquired the Fighters guild, Ahn-jaehyun had thought his opportunity had finally come.

From Ahn-jaehyun’s perspective, it hadn’t been great to share the Black Continent with the Five Stars and the Stormhunters guild.

On the other hand, if the field got messy, the story would change. As the competition amongst the 30 great guilds intensified, he would be able to operate more freely in the Black Continent.

‘These bastards might attack me to screw me over... Something smells off.’

If the 30 great guilds worked with each other, it wouldn’t have a positive effect on the Hahoe Mask. The Hahoe Mask wasn’t some friendly and handsome oppa next door. If the 30 great guilds had the chance to eliminate the Hahoe Mask, they would gladly get rid of him immediately.

‘Still, it is great to see a great volume of Items being released.’

One of the positives of the 30 great guilds operating in the Black Continent was the fact the Black Continent was stabilizing as each faction kept each other in check. This had the effect of more Unique Items and Skill Books being put on the market.



Warlord had an Item Crafting system, and if one was lucky, one could produce a Unique Rank Item, while trying to make a normal Rank Item.

At the same time, the Black Continent had a lot of locations, where one could acquire Skill Books. There was the Dungeons called Ruins, and the Dungeon Rewards frequently gave No Name Skill Books as reward.

Level 190 No Name Skill Books were being put on the market intermittently.

Ahn-jaehyun tapped his Tablet PC to go into Warlord's auction house. There were 3 level 190 No Name Skill Book up for sale. The price was 1 million gold. All three of them were priced the same at 1 million gold.

‘Crazy bastards.’

Of course, the sellers weren't serious about selling it for gold. If they were really going to sell it for 1 million gold, one would be better off allowing the option of trading it for an Item of similar price instead of gold.

The sellers had put it up with a YOLO mentality. If it did sell, it would be a huge windfall for the seller. Even if it was a very slim possibility, there was a a bit of hope behind their actions.



‘If it was a 100 thousand gold then maybe....’

Warlord had a fair number of wealthy individuals, who had too much money.

‘100,000 gold.’

Ahn-jaehyun clicked his tongue when he realized what he had just thought about.

‘I’m so far down this road. I’m actually thinking about buying a Skill book for 100 thousand gold...’

Ahn-jaehyun shook his head from side to side, and his gaze naturally landed on the V-Gear lying on top of the mattress. It was the most expensive V-Gear model a civilian could buy. He felt a weight press down on his chest.

2.

There were two mountains surrounded by a red forest. From afar, it looked as if the mountains were burning at its base. These mountains were so tall that it was hard to even look up at the peak of the mountains.

Red Forest.

It was one of the top 5 most difficult hunting ground found on



the Black Continent.

One had to be level 240 to have access to the hunting ground!

The Stormhunters guild had found this place first, but they had given up any rights to it. It was still too difficult to claim this location as a hunting ground. It was a hellish location for the Users.

There was a fearsome monster that had made this place into hell.

Koo-uh-uh-uhng!

It was 3 meters tall, and it had human arms and legs like a werewolf. However, it possessed incredible offense, defense and combat ability that couldn't be compared to a humanoid monster.

The Werebear was first found by the Storm Princess Hahui, and the monster was famous for knocking her down with a single strike.

To be precise, Hahui thought the Werebear was cute, so she approached it to give it a hug. As she attempted the hug, she hadn't been able to dodge the Werebear's attack, and she was sent flying through the air. Hatch had recorded this scene, and he had uploaded it to his personal youtube page.

In just five days, the video received 30 million views. It was a very popular video.



Currently, the Werebear was letting out a rough cry.

Koo-uh-uh-uhng!

To be precise, it let out a scream.

Two Skeleton Knights easily turned away the arms swung by the Werebear, and the small Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors continuously stabbed at the Werebear's legs. When the Werebear tried to catch the Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors, the Skeleton Knights immediately brought down their swords to make wounds on its thick hide.

In such a situation, the cry let out by the Werebear could be interpreted as a scream.

“Ah. It is so noisy..”

Hyrkan expressed his annoyance at hearing such a noise. The other Users would be startled by the sight in front of him, but it was something he saw everyday.

Moreover, Hyrkan was busy pressing the Golden Conch to his ear.

– To the east…….



The Golden Conch let out a low voice. The voice came out at really low volume. If one wasn't paying full attention to it, one wouldn't be able to make out the words. This was the reason why Hyrkan had become annoyed at the Werebear's cry.

‘Shit.’

Of course, this wasn't the real source of his annoyance.

‘I have to go east again?’

It was the 20th day.

It had been 20 days, since Hyrkan had received the Quest from the Heard Fortress Ruin town.

Hyrkan had relied on the low voice of the Golden Conch for directions. It kept sending him towards the east, and he was once again sent towards the same direction.

‘How far does it want me to go? Is it a bug?’

Moreover, he hadn't traveled a short distance in the past 20 days. He had traveled a large distance. Despite this fact, he had nothing to show for it. He hadn't been able to find any more traces regarding the Archmage Bokan, and he hadn't found any Ruins either.



‘This Bokan bastard is worse than Abraham. What kind of a Quest has no end like this?’

In truth, it was the worst part about this Quest.

“Hoo-oooh.”

‘After the Heard Fortress Ruin, I haven’t been able to earn any more Ancient Powers.’

The fastest way to gain the Ancient Power was to find the Ruins. The other way was the Quest Rewards.

Moreover, if one wanted to earn a Transcendent Rank Ancient Power, one needed Quests that took at least 10 days to complete them.

This was also the reason why he had thought he would at the very least find two Ruins during this Quest.

He had thought the appearance of Ruins was a given. In the Ruined Kingdom episode, the Ruins acted as the stepping stones to progress in one’s Quest.

This was the Quest to find the Archmage Bokan, so shouldn’t this Quest have more extraordinary stepping stones?

However, for the past 20 days, Hyrkan had been busily fighting



monsters.

‘If the Quest Reward wasn’t a Skill Book, I would have given up on this much earlier.’

Hyrkan shook his head from side to side as he once again looked at the battlefield. The Skeleton Knights and Skeleton Warriors made up a group of seven, and they were facing a Werebear. The monster was riddled with wounds.

However, it wasn’t as if the Werebear was the only one to take wounds. The Skeleton Knights and Skeleton Warriors had taken significant damage at the Werebear’s counterattacks. In fact, three Skeleton Warriors had already reverted themselves to Skeleton Fragments. The Werebear had been fighting 10 foes, and it had taken down three.

‘I can understand why the Storm Princess was sent flying by this monster.’

The Werebears were really strong.

From Hyrkan’s perspective, it was one of the strongest mid-sized normal monster he had encountered.

Moreover, the Werebears were absent from his memories.

“Tsk!”



Hyrkan clicked his tongue. At that moment, the Werebear suddenly looked at Hyrkan. When it met Hyrkan's eyes, the light within its eyes changed. It used to have a black gleam in its eyes, but now it had turned red.

Hyrkan wasn't taken aback. This was the first time he had seen the monster do this, and when the monster stared at him with those eyes, Hyrkan knew something was up.

Hyrkan was already running at that point.

The Werebear threw its body towards Hyrkan. The Skeleton Knights raised their shields in front of them to block it, but the Werebear was much stronger than before. The Skeleton Knights were thrown to the ground by the Body Slam.

Koo-uh-uhng!

The Wearbear let out a roar, and it got onto all four feet for the first time. It started running after Hyrkan.

The Skeleton Knights rolled across the ground before they immediately righted themselves.

The Skeleton Knights looked at the Werebear's rear with a blue light in their eyes.



Dduhl-goo-ruhk, dduhl-goo-ruhk!

The Mini Ogre Skeleton Warriors were geniuses at tracking down foes, so they quickly followed right behind the Werebear. In a single breath, a single Mini Ogre Skeleton Warrior climbed atop the Werebear, and it started to stab down at the Werebear.

Hyrkan, who had been running, suddenly changed direction, and he started to run in a circuitous route. After a brief moment, he came to a stop. When Hyrkan stopped running, the Werebear rushed towards Hyrkan.

Koo-uhng!

The Werebear was about to pounce on him when Hyrkan lowered his body. the Werebear flew over Hyrkan as if it was jumping over an obstacle. After landing on the floor, the Werebear quickly turned its body.

Chul-kuhk, chul-kuhk, chul-kuhk!

In a flash, the Skeleton Knights and Skeleton Warriors surrounded the Werebear. They maintained the perimeter as they charged towards the monster.

He had run away using the Whirlpool escape plan. He had run away in the shape of a whirlpool, and in the end, the bait would become surrounded.



Hyrkan looked at the sight in a calm manner, and he once again put the Golden Conch to his ear.

– To the north....

‘Uh?’

At that moment, a new word appeared for the first time.

Hyrkan turned his head towards the north.

3.

Hyrkan raised his head.

It was a large mountain, and everything about it was grand. Within this mountain, there was a cave that had a slightly different grandeur than a naturally made cave. On the exterior walls, there were realistic large knights carved into it, and it looked as if they would come to life at any moment. However, the sight that stole Hyrkan’s gaze wasn’t the knight sculptures.

‘No way.’

There was a 10 meter tall cave entrance located between the large knight sculptures. On top of the cave entrance, the image of a crown was carved into it.



‘Can it be?’

Moreover, there were gems embedded into the crown. The gems were massive. Each of the gems decorating the crown was easily bigger than a man’s fist.

Hyrkan looked at the cave entrance, and he put his treasured Golden Conch to his ear.

– Go in…….

Hyrkan followed the Golden Conch’s words, and he entered the cave. Darkness greeted him.

There was no way anyone would smile happily when looking at this darkness. It was as if all the ills of the world was gathered within this darkness.

However, a smile formed on Hyrkan’s lips as he looked at the darkness.

‘Thank you, my teacher’s teacher.’

Hyrkan finally found his first stepping stone on the 20th day.



## Chapter 169 – King’s Tomb (2)

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4.

The corridor was so well made that it was hard to call it a tunnel within a cave. There were checkered tiles on the ground akin to go boards. There was not a single tile out of place, and the surface of the walls in the semicircular tunnel was decorated with beautiful patterns.

It was a tunnel befitting a tomb of a king.

This was the last path traveled by a king. This was why this tunnel possessed extravagance, and it gave off a feeling of stately dignity.

[The Guardians, who guard the King’s Tomb, is approaching you.]

The King’s Tomb didn’t allow anyone to enter it except for the king. It didn’t look kindly to intruders.

Accompanying the System Announcement, soldiers made out of clay started to appear from the other side of the tunnel. They kept in formation as they marched forward.

Chubuhk, chubuhk!



The sounds of their feet moving in sync was heard. They marched towards the intruder, who had decided to interfere with the king's eternal sleep.

There were a lot of them. As expected of a road made for a king, the tunnel was large enough for 10 people to stand abreast of each other with their hands extended.. However, the clay soldiers made this tunnel feel cramped.

Twelves soldiers stood abreast of each other. Moreover, Hyrkan couldn't see the end of the line.

The only thing he was sure about was the fact that they numbered in the hundreds.

It was an incredibly large army.

Just imagining such a large army marching against oneself was enough to make anyone feel faint. Moreover, it was hard to even come up with a strategy to deal with such a large army. However, in such a situation, the User decided to charge forward.

Chuh-buhk! Chuh-buhk!

One could hear steps that were out of sync with the sound of footsteps made by several hundred clay soldiers marching together.



Pah-aht, pah-aht!

The sound of nimble footsteps could be heard.

The sound of the running footsteps and the slow marching footsteps alternated with each other.

Shweek!

In the middle of the alternating sounds, the sound of the air being split was heard.

Ssssk!

Then the sound of something solid being cut was heard.

Shweek, ssssk!

These sounds were heard in succession, and afterwards, the sound of something hard being hit was heard.

Ggah-ahng!

It was the start to the battle.

The battle started out in a noble fashion. A User threw his body towards a tunnel filled with several hundred Clay Soldiers.



Wasn't this something that couldn't be done unless one had guts and a gallant spirit?

However, the result of such a gallant move wasn't that great. He was like a bulldozer. He sliced through the Clay Soldiers in front of him like tofu. He cut through everything without hesitation.

However, at some point, his gallant spirit couldn't overcome everything. He had charged straight into ranks of the endless Clay Soldiers, and now he was surrounded.

The User was surrounded, and his headlong charge had come to a stop. Sharp swords were flying towards him at all sides, and the User displayed his ability.

The User had been in a desperately dangerous situation, and he could expect no outside help. The User had to solve the problem through his own power.

Che-ehng, cheng!

The unceasing sounds of swords clashing was heard, and at that moment, the User stabbed a sword into the ground.

The sword planted into the ground melted as it fountained forth liquid steel. The amount of liquid steel was much more than the amount making up the sword. It was an incredible amount.



Kwahl, kwahl!

The liquid steel, which poured out from the sword, didn't merely wet the floor. It started to overflow.

[Iron Golem was summoned.]

The overflowing liquid steel quickly formed into a 4 meter tall body. It turned into an enormous Golem made out of steel.

The Iron Golem appeared, and it immediately clogged the tunnel.

“Hardening!”

The Iron Golem hardened in place as it became a wall blocking the tunnel.

Ggah-ahng, Ggah-ahng!

From the other side of the Iron Golem, one could hear the sound of swords being brought down in an attempt to destroy the Iron Golem. However, they could only attempt it. The Iron Golem didn't even let out a cry, and it didn't allow the monsters to wound its body easily.

The Users, who had been fighting solo, put his back against the



Iron Golem.

“Hoo-ooh!”

He was finally able to let out a sigh. As the User let out a sight, the corner of Hyrkan’s mouth lifted.

Dahk dahk!

Hyrkan immediately flicked his fingers. From where Hyrkan had come from, a group suddenly appeared.

The Death Knight stood in front of the group. It was followed by two Skeleton Knights and 10 Skeleton Warriors!

When the enemies appeared in the rear, a portion of the Clay Soldiers stopped pointing their swords toward Hyrkan, and they quickly turned towards the new group.

When he saw this sight, he regripped his Deposed Prince’s Sword as he got ready to attack again.

‘I’ve been reaping only the benefits for awhile now. I guess I’ll have to cough up some of it back now.’

King’s Tomb.



When he entered the King's Tomb, he had waited for the guardians called the Clay Soldiers to show up.

Clay Soldiers.

It was a monster that appeared in the Ruined Kingdom episode. They were quite similar in nature to the Skeleton Warriors under his command. A fixed amount of damage was recovered as time progressed, and they didn't have a particular weakness that could be exploited. One had to give cumulative damage to kill it. It also had a pretty good Battle AI, and most importantly, they moved in a group numbering in the hundreds.

When he saw that the Clay Soldiers were his opponents, Hyrkan immediately came up with a battle scenario.

The plan he was carrying out right now was that exact scenario.

Hyrkan had waded into the unknown number of Clay Soldiers, and he had summoned the Iron Golem to make a wall. Then the Iron Golem was used to eliminate the divided forces of his enemies!

However, it was too inefficient to leave everything to his Skeleton underlings and the Golem.

Moreover, his Skeleton underlings were too unreserved in their attacks. His Skeleton underlings resembled Hyrkan, who had charged headlong into the ranks of the enemies.



At first, the Skeleton Warriors would be able to crush their enemies. However, the problem occurred afterwards. The Clay Soldiers would regain their original form in short order just like the Skeleton underlings!

If they weren't careful, the Skeleton underlings would be surrounded by the Clay Soldiers.

After being surrounded, his Skeleton underlings would put up a good fight. However, his magical energy would be the cost of letting such a frantic struggle occur.

He didn't know when this battle would end. However, if his magical energy bottomed out, it would be Hyrkan's defeat.

“Hoo-ooh!”

This was why he chose this method. He wanted a more efficient, logical and wise battle tactic.

Of course, this would be hard. The Clay Soldier's combat ability didn't reflect their crude appearance. The swords were swung in a powerful and an intelligent manner. They didn't mindlessly hack and slash their opponents. When one stabbed, the others predicted how the enemy would respond. Then the other Clay Soldiers in line would stab their swords towards this predicted location with a bit of a time lag.

Usually, the prospect of being surrounded by the group of Clay



Soldiers as a Striker would give one chills and nausea.

However, at that moment, Hyrkan had a smile on his face.

‘This fucking game.’

It was difficult. It was arduous. It was annoying.

‘Well, it is very Warlord-like.’

This was why it was fun.

It had always been like this. This was the reason why Hyrkan found Warlord fun, and this was also the reason why he kept playing it. If he couldn’t feel such enjoyment from playing it, Hyrkan wouldn’t have even bothered to start playing Warlord.

“Stand tall.”

Kahng kahng!

Hyrkan patted the Iron Golem’s body, which had become the strongest wall. Then he charged towards the Clay Soldiers.

5.

The very extravagant and clean tunnel leading to the tomb was



filled with dirt. It was quite dirty.

It was the remains leftover when one thousand Clay Soldiers were killed.

Hyrkan looked unsightly as he had just finished fighting a thousand Clay Soldiers. The Argardo's armor named the Dark Spot set boasted incredible defense, yet there were clear scratches on the armor. Some parts were broken, and other parts were smashed. It was evidence showing how fierce this battle had been.

[You are short on magical energy. The 'Undying' Skill's effect is gone.]

When he stopped taking the consumable Items, his magic immediately bottomed out. He had been barely able to maintain his magical energy thanks to the recovery Items. This was a battle where he had reached his limit.

'This is the first time, since the Anugas Raid, where I might have died.'

Hyrkan had several near death experiences as he faced powerful monsters. Argardo, Immoral Prince, Frost Knight, Anugas....

These were unfathomable existences, and it wouldn't have been strange to see Hyrkan die at any of their hands.



However, he had almost experienced death by the sheer number of his enemies right now. It had been a while since he experienced such a thing.

‘The difficulty of the game is higher than expected.’

In truth, Hyrkan hadn’t realized the King’s Tomb had such a high difficulty setting.

“Whew..”

The difficulty was higher than expected, and he had bled more than expected.

‘I used up the consumable Items at twice the expected rate.’

When Hyrkan talked about bleeding, he was referring to his consumption of the consumable Items. Moreover, he had been in constant battle was 20 days, so he had a low stock of good consumable Items.

‘No matter what, I have to go back after this.’

With the amount of consumable Items left, he would be able to conduct one more battle such as this one.

Still, Hyrkan could calculate the use of his consumable Items as a



bleed rather than a critical wound.

‘This was possible, because it was me. A decent party of 10 to 20 members would have never been able to break through this place.’

If it was a party of normal Users, over half their numbers would have experienced Game Over.

Hyrkan was astonished by the difficulty of the game.

At the same time, he was satisfied with it.

‘Yes. It is possible, because I’m me.’

From Hyrkan’s perspective, the King’s Tomb had been one of most difficult locations in terms of difficulty. The crux of the difficulty was the fact that this stage was meant to be overcome with the cooperation of numerous Users. On the other hand, the reward should reflect this difficulty.

Since he had cleared this place by himself, Hyrkan was well qualified to take the rewards for himself.

‘Yes. I’ll monopolize this place.’

He was qualified to be able to reap the numerous rewards by himself.



‘This is a King’s Tomb. Of course, there will be more here. At the very least, it should have a Unique Rank Item set. Moreover, there should be two to three scrolls of Ancient Power. They are making the User go through such hardship. There is no way a single Skill Book would be given as a Quest Reward.’

Hyrkan smiled as he put the Golden Conch to his ear. At that moment, the Golden Conch started speaking again.

– Forward…….

The Golden Conch gave the direction, and Hyrkan moved with a Skeleton Warrior in front of him. The Death Knight followed behind Hyrkan, and the rest of the Skeleton Underlings followed the Death Knight as if it was the mother duck.

How long did they walk for?

The tunnel came to an end, and a large space was revealed. In the large space, there was a single altar. Moreover, there were 4 entrances with the altar at its center, and Hyrkan had exited from one of these entrances.

[You’ve completed ‘Trace of Bokan’ Quest.]

At that moment, he heard the Announcement telling him he had completed the Quest.



The Quest had come to an end, and he had to go back to report what he had found. If he went back to Ahimbree, he would be able to get the reward.

However, Hyrkan wasn't satisfied with such a result.

Wasn't this the King's Tomb? This incredible tomb was made for a king. The king wouldn't have been sent to his grave empty handed. At the very least, they would have filled the tomb with gold and gems as a sign of respect.

No, he was sure of this fact.

'This can't be the end. There has to be something more to this.'

Hyrkan once again put the Golden Conch to his ear.

– I've discovered the tomb of a king. I don't know which king is buried here, but there are signs that indicate that this king had fought against the Dragon's Army.

At that moment, the Golden Conch started to tell a long story unlike before.

'Yes. There is no way this could be the end.'

Hyrkan listened carefully.



– This was why I believed everything within this place would be of help in facing the Dragon’s Army. I sent everything within this place to the great Blacksmith Olf.

‘Uh?’

As he heard the story, Hyrkan’s expression crumpled.

– New heroes will emerge, and I tasked him to make equipments for those that will fill face the Dragon’s Army in the future. I also gave him a key I found here for safekeeping.

The story ended there.

Hyrkan detached the Golden Conch from his ear, then he shook it couple times before putting it next to his ear again.

– I’ve discovered the tomb....

When the same message started to flow out, Hyrkan let out a shout.

“For real? Fuck!”

According to Boka’s story, the King’s Tomb had been filled with incredible Items as expected of a resting place for a king. However, Archmage Boka had decided to send all the Items here, so it could



be converted into Items that'll be used to fight the Dragon's Army. It was all sent to the Blacksmith Olf. This was the gist of the story.

Basically, there was nothing to be gained here. Everything worth having here had been given to the care of the Blacksmith Olf.

“Wow! Wow!”

At that moment, Hyrkan was so mad that he was having a hard time expressing his anger.

At that moment, Hyrkan heard a new System Announcement in his ears.

[Quest 'Ancient King's Artifact' is starting.]

[Quest 'Ancient King's Test' has started.]

[The king's Guardian Knights are starting to move.]

Koo-koo-koo!

As if it had been waiting for the Announcement, the King's Tomb rumbled as if it was about to collapse. At that moment, Hyrkan remembered the large statue of knights decorating the entrance of cave.

“Shit!”



Moreover, the scene of him fighting these enormous sculptures of knights popped up within his head.

‘It seems all my bad imaginations comes to pass.’

Hyrkan’s instinct regarding this point was quite good.

6.

“Thank you for your hard work..”

“Thank you for your hard work.!”

“Good job, everyone!”

The words of encouragement was heard coming out from various sources. These messages were also the signal that notified the battle had come to an end. It also told the other Users that they could relax and they could take a break.

However, not all members could relax and rest. It was the opposite. Some Users ramped up their activities.

“Did you see the mural?”

“We’ve recorded everything.”



“What about the hidden room?”

“We are exhausting all methods to research it.”

“Don’t miss a single clue. Even if you have to work overtime, I want you to be thorough.”

“Yes.”

Natal had participated in the battle, and he had performed very well. It wouldn’t be shocking if he fell over from exhaustion, yet he was also bustling into action.

This place was a ruin called the Tomb of the Heroes, and he was looking over the footage regarding the mural.

‘We’ve finally found a clue that’ll give us the big picture regarding this Main Scenario Quest.’

Usually, the Hydra guild moved faster through the Main Scenario Quest compared to the other guilds.

However, this wasn’t true in the third Main Scenario Quest. They had a very late start. This was why they didn’t have the time to rest, and they couldn’t afford any mistakes.

‘We need to see the big picture. That’s important.’



Most Users would have ignored the murals, but Natal would put his brain to work to find clues.

– Natal-nim! There is a mural on the ceiling. You should have a look at it.

One of the Users investigating the Ruin called out to Natal. Natal immediately headed towards the User. Natal arrived at a room.

There was a memorial stone in the middle of the room.

“Over there.”

The User, who called Natal over, pointed towards the ceiling over the memorial stone.

As he had indicated, there was a mural on the ceiling.

The mural’s content was quite simple.

The mural was divided in half.

On one side, there was an enormous Dragon, and there were all kinds of monsters in front of the Dragon.

The monsters were staring towards the other half of the mural



where a castle was present. There were numerous humans gathered in front of the castle with their weapons raised . Moreover, five warriors, who were letting out various Aurae, stood in front of the army.

When he saw the content of the mural, Natal spoke in a low voice.

“I’m not sure on anything else, but I’m sure our final enemy will be the Dragon’s Army.”

“What?”

“Nothing. I was talking to myself. First, let’s take footage of the mural then the memorial stone... Could you try lifting it?”

“Ah. I’m a Priest. My Strength stat is....”

“Hurry up and call in a Striker. After we finish our work.... Let’s destroy all the murals as a precaution.”

“Yes. Understood.”

After the conversation, a bitter laugh came out of Natal.

‘It seems it won’t be long before Warlord reverts into being a normal game like all the other games on the market.’



## Chapter 170 – King’s Tomb (3)

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7.

### [Ancient King’s Artifact]

- Quest Rank : Epic
- Quest Level Range : 230
- Quest Content : Go to the Blacksmith Olf. Please ask him about the Ancient King’s Artifact.
- Quest Reward : Conch made out of a Dragon’s Horn.

### [Ancient King’s Test]

- Quest Level Range : Unique
- Quest Level Range : 220
- Quest Content : You’ve entered the King’s Tomb. The King will test if you are worthy. If you pass the test, the king will overlook your transgression. If not, you will receive an appropriate punishment.
- Quest Reward : King’s Treasure.

Hyrkan’s expression wasn’t great as he looked over the two new Quests.

‘An Ancient King’s Test...’



This was the Ancient King's Test.

They dressed it up with pretty words like transgression and punishment, but the main point of these Quests were simple.

We prepared a really hard monster to kill, so we want you suffer more!

‘Of course.’

At that moment, Hyrkan realized he would be meeting the proctor of the King's test soon, and he could guess at the identity of this being.

As expected, he saw the reality of his situation as he walked through the dark tunnel to reach the light.

In front of the King's Tomb, there were two large statues on the either side of the entrance. The statues were knights. They were stone knights equipped with stone swords and stone armor!

‘Yes, it is as I thought.’

They were placed at the entrance to the King's Tomb. These statues were guarding the entrance, and they would awaken to test the intruders within the King's Tomb.

---



[The Guardian Knights of the King's Tomb is glaring down at you.]

The examiners of the test located the intruder.

Koo koo koo!

The two statues let out a heavy sound as they lowered their heads. They stared at Hyrkan, who stood behind the threshold of the entrance.

Their faces were carved from stone, so they didn't have functioning eyes. They couldn't make expressions, yet Hyrkan felt the glare coming from the statues. It was as if they wanted squash him like a bug.

However, they didn't immediately attack Hyrkan. They just looked at Hyrkan.

Hyrkan was still within the King's Tomb.

They couldn't point or swing their swords towards the King's Tomb.

Hyrkan had already realized this fact, so he let out a bitter laugh.



Maybe, this was a mercy. Currently, the Guardian Knights were showing their own form of mercy towards Hyrkan.

Hyrkan didn't feel good about receiving such leniency from them. Monsters were looking down on him, so there was no reason why he would feel good about it.

‘All right.’

At that moment, Hyrkan came to a decision.

‘Let's try this.’

He'll kill them.

He'll willingly pass the test.

No, he'll punish those, who look down on him.

‘I'll make you pay for allowing me to make preparations.’

He started his summons.

The Guardian Knight wouldn't attack Hyrkan until he exited the the King's Tomb. Basically, Hyrkan had the luxury to summon all the underlings he wanted.



Hyrkan planted a sword in the ground. It immediately gushed out black steel liquid.

While the black steel liquid was rushing outwards, Hyrkan took out two gems, and he gripped them in each hand.

Ddook dook!

The gem in his right hand became liquefied, and it fell to the floor.

Hwah-roo-roo!

The gem in his left hand was clenched as fire poured out from his fist.

[Iron Golem was summoned.]

A black Iron Golem had appeared.

[You've summoned a Golem.]

The gem allowed him to form an Earth Golem in the shape of an Ogre.

[The Fire Golem was summoned.]



When he unclenched his fists, a griffin appeared from the surging flames. The Fire Golem had made its appearance.

The three Golems took form, yet the Guardian Knights refused to move. They continued to stare down at Hyrkan.

Hyrkan mocked the statues as he took out a thumb sized blue gem from the pouch on his waist. He held the gem inside his mouth using his teeth.

He was just biting on the gem, yet his magical energy was quickly being replenished.

While it replenished, Hyrkan unfastened his wristwatch. When he grasped his unbound wristwatch, the empty air started to split open. From the rip in space, the undying Knight slowly appeared from within this crack.

[The Death Knight was summoned.]

The Death Knight riding its Skeleton Steed, and it looked imposing.

Kwah-jeek!

At that moment, he crushed the blue gem being held in place by his teeth.



When he crushed the gem, a strong taste of mint filled the inside of Hyrkan's mouth. The mint taste was so strong that it was spicy. Hyrkan endured the minty taste.

Patience was bitter, but the result was sweet.

The Death Knight's summoning had bottomed out his magical energy, yet it was quickly filling up now. The speed couldn't be compared to before.

“Open the Power of Frost.”

Then he sacrificed his full magical energy to activate the Ancient Power of Frost.

Finally, Hyrkan stepped out out of the King's Tomb.

[The Guardian Knights will test you!]

The test began.

8.

The earth Golem borrowed the form of an Ogre using the Clay Play Skill, and it was almost 8 meters tall. This was why the Ogre Golem was able to look eye to eye with the Guardian Knights, and it would be able to fight the statues for supremacy.



On the other hand, the small size of the Griffin Fire Golem was a moot point. It had wings, and it had the ability to fly. The Griffin Fire Golem was already flapping its wings, and the Guardian Knights was beneath its flying form.

The only one to appear in its original form was the Iron Golem, and it was quite lacking compared to the other two Golems. It was stocky, yet it was only 4 meters tall. It looked small in a battlefield where the giants fought. While its body was small, it was made out of steel. It had a dignified air to it.

In this battle of the giants, the last to join was the Death Knight. It appeared riding the Skeleton Steed, and it also looked very small amongst these giants. However, the Death Knight didn't back away. Instead, it sat on the Skeleton Steed as it refused to pull out its sword. It was as if the Death Knight was allowing the Guardian Knights to make the first move. The Death Knight was looking down on the Guardian Knights, and its manner was dignified and imposing.

These six being closed the distance. None were in a hurry. It would be enough to act with urgency after the battle had started.

Then the battle started.

Hoo-ooong!

The first move was taken by the Guardian Knights. One took a swing at the Iron Golem, and the other swung its sword at the Ogre Golem.



The Guardian Knights held swords carved out of stone. Basically, it was a chunk of rock. It was fascinating to see such a heavy weapon part the winds. Moreover, it wasn't simply parting the air. It was swiftly cutting through the air.

It was terrifying.

Instead of dodging the terrifying sword strike of the Guardian Knight, the Ogre Golem swung the stone axe in its hand.

It blocked an attack with its own attack!

It was a very ogre-like act.

Ggwah-ah-ahng!

A thunderous sound exploded forth as two pieces of rock clashed against each other. Accompanying the thunderous sound, the head of the Ogre Golem's stone axe was chipped. On the other hand, a crack appeared on the Guardian Knight's sword, and a golden light was emitted by the sword. The true weapon was hidden underneath a layer of rock. The sword showed its true self. If the Ogre Golem was able to speak, it would have called the Guardian Knight a cheater.

Wah-roo-roo-roohk!



As if to avenge the Ogre Golem, the Griffin Fire Golem let out a stream of fire towards the head of the Guardian Knight.

At the same time, there was another fierce battle occurring nearby. This battle also started with the Guardian Knight swinging its sword. While one Guardian Knight swung its sword towards the Ogre Golem, the other Guardian Knight swung its sword toward the Iron Golem.

Hoo-oohng!

As expected, it was a terrifying attack. However, the Iron Golem couldn't dodge the attack, and it had no plans to do so. It decided to take on the Guardian Knight's sword with its head and body.

Ggwahhhhng!

A loud sound exploded forth once again. It wasn't simply a loud noise. It was a thunderous roar that could be heard nowhere else. Moreover, the result of this sound was horrifying. There was a big divot in the head of the Iron Golem's hard head. If it was a living creature, it would have died instantly.

Moreover, when the Guardian Knight's sword impacted on the Iron Golem, it also revealed a gold light.

Puhl-jjuhk!

The one to avenge the Iron Golem was the Death Knight. The



Skeleton Steed leapt into the air. Thanks to the Skeleton Steed's leap, the Death Knight was able to take a swing at the Guardian Knight's neck.

Puh-uhk!

The Death Knight's sword cut at the left side of the Guardian Knight's neck. A deep cut appeared on the Guardian Knight's armor, which was made from stone.

This was how the battle between two Guardian Knights, three Golems and a Death Knight started.

This terrifying battle was filled with fearsome sounds.

Hoo-ooong!

It was the sound of the Guardian Knights swinging its heavy sword.

Ggwah-ahng!

There was the Ogre Golem's stone axe hitting the body of the Guardian Knights.

Ggahhng!



This was the sound of the Iron Golem resisting the fearsome attack of the Guardian Knight.

Hwah-roo-roo!

Then there was the sound of an enormous flame emanating from the Griffin Fire Golem.

Shweek! Shweek!

On top of it all, the sharp sounds of the sword being swung by the Death Knight was heard.

Various sounds filled the battlefield, and small sounds were drowned out.

In truth, the Skeleton Warriors and the Skeleton Knight summoned with the Death Knight wasn't able to do much. They were like dogs at the feet of fighting elephants. They could struggle to not be stomped on by the elephant's feet, but that was all they could do.

Hyrkan threw his body in the battlefield.

Hyrkan was the smallest combatant, and he looked like a shrimp entering into a fight between whales.

Of course, there was no hesitation to Hyrkan's movements.



Koong koong!

Hyrkan deftly avoided the footsteps of the Golems and the Guardian Knights. Each of their steps were filled with enormous power, and their footsteps shook the ground.

In a flash, Hyrkan stuck to the leg of a Guardian Knight.

“Hoo-ooh!”

Hyrkan took in short breaths as he climbed up the leg of the Guardian Knight as if it was a cliff.

Koo-oohng, koo-oohng!

He continuously climbed this shaking cliff. It was impossible to do such a feat with just pure strength.

However, this task was easy for Hyrkan. He had learned climbing in the virtual space, and it was something he was better than anyone in the world.

It really was as if Hyrkan was walking across a flat ground. He quickly went up the leg of the Guardian Knight.

Ggoohk!



As he climbed, he stuck a Skeleton Fragment in any cracks he came across. Hyrkan continued to climb up after placing these Skeleton Fragments, and they took shape as Skeleton Warriors. They looked like ticks that lived parasitically on one's skin. Moreover, these Skeleton Warriors were letting out white breath from their mouth.

The Skeleton Warriors showed the path Hyrkan had taken. Hyrkan climbed atop the Guardian Knight's back, and he moved towards the right shoulder. Seven Skeleton Warriors had taken form behind him, and they attempted to injure the body of the Guardian Knight.

However, from the perspective of the Guardian Knight, it was as if it was being attacked by mosquitoes. Still, this was also the reason why it couldn't leave them alone. They were poking at its body, so how could it leave them be?

The Guardian Knight tried to dislodge the Frost Skeleton Warriors when it had the luxury to do so.

When it did, the Ogre Golem and the Griffin Fire Golem used this opportunity to attack the Guardian Knight.

In such a situation, the Guardian Knight didn't have the luxury to pay attention to Hyrkan, who had climbed up to its right shoulder.

‘I'll start with the shoulder.’



Hyrkan planted his sword in the Guardian Knight's right shoulder.

Kwah-jeek!

His sword was able to pierce 10 centimeters. However, his sword was having a hard time penetrating deeper.

Ggahng!

Instead, he felt an increased resistance.

‘There is something underneath it.’

At that moment, the Guardian Knight's left hand came flying in toward Hyrkan, who was on its shoulder.

‘Tsk.’

Hyrkan dodged the hand, and he moved to the nape of the Guardian Knight's neck. Then he immediately climbed down towards its back. Of course, the Guardian Knight's hand couldn't easily reach that spot.

Ggwah-ahng!



While the Guardian Knight was distracted, the Ogre Golem's stone axe impacted on the Guardian Knight's body.

As usual, a large boom rang out, and the Guardian Knight's body was rocked. The Guardian Knight ignored Hyrkan again, and it looked at the Ogre Golem. It swung its sword towards the Ogre Golem.

Hyrkan quickly climbed to the shoulder region again.

‘If I can't stab it...’

He planted a Bone Explosive within the wound he created.

‘I'll just blow it up.’

Kwahng!

The Bone Explosive exploded immediately.

However, he wasn't satisfied with just detonating the Bone Explosives. The region affected by the explosion became frozen. At that moment, the Guardian Knight tried to move its left arm.

Zzuh-juhk, zzuh-juhk!

The ice stuck to the right shoulder couldn't take the rough



movements of the Guardian Knight. It started to crack.

Of course, the ice also made the Guardian Knight move slower.

This wasn't the end of the attack.

The Skeleton Knights stuck to the body of the Guardian Knight, and their added power of Frost was slowly making the Guardian Knight heavier and unresponsive.

When he saw this, Hyrkan took out a new Bone Explosive.

9.

Koo-oohnng!

When the Guardian Knight took a knee, the ground shook.

The kneeling Guardian Knight was full of wounds. The indomitable body was damaged to a point where one couldn't tell what it looked like originally. The stone surrounding its body were mostly broken away, and the Guardian Knight revealed the golden layer beneath. The exposed golden layer was also in rough shape.

However, the most damning part was the fact that it was on its knee. When a knight was on its knee, it was a declaration of defeat. In a knight's battle, defeat meant death.



The Guardian Knight no longer got up. It didn't move an inch. It had lost, and subsequently, it accepted its death.

[The Fire Golem Skill Rank has increased to Rank B.]

[The Iron Golem Skill Rank has increased to Rank D.]

[Death Knight Skill Rank has increased to Rank C.]

[You've earned the title 'Being who took down the Guardian Knights'.]

[You've earned the title 'Being who Passed the King's Test']

[You've completed the Quest 'Ancient King's Test'. Please find the King's Treasure within the body of the Guardian Knight.]

There was nothing that assured the defeat of the Guardian Knights more than the consecutive System Announcement heard in Hyrkan's ears.

Instead of a cheer of happiness, Hyrkan let out a deep sigh.

'It was harder than I thought.'

Hyrkan stood on top of the kneeling Guardian Knight's shoulder, and he looked at his surrounding.



The first thing he saw was his Iron Golem. It was dented so much that it looked pitiful. It was miraculous that it was still moving.

Then there was the remains of the earth Golem. In the end, it couldn't stand up against the repeated attacks from the Guardian Knight, so it had returned to being a pile of dirt.

The fire Golem was also in the same boat as the earth Golem. At a certain point, Hyrkan's magic consumption outstripped the recovery speed. When Hyrkan's magical energy became zero, the Fire Golem was snuffed out like a candle blown out by the wind.

The Death Knight and its Skeleton Steed still stood in an imposing manner, but its armor was full of wounds. The pristine appearance from when it was first summoned was no longer to be seen. It looked like a straggler.

Since it could no longer use its Undying skill, most of the summoned Skeleton Warriors and Skeleton Knight didn't regenerate. Only two Skeleton Warriors remained.

It had been an arduous victory.

Moreover, Hyrkan had used all of his consumable Items in this battle.

‘This fucking game.’

At that moment, he had a thought.



‘I worked like a dog. If the reward isn’t anything special... I would flip this game on its head.’

He had worked so hard, yet if his reward was subpar, he would never accept it!

Hyrkan made this resolution, and he turned the dial of his wristwatch. He switched his Item.

Choo-roong, choo-rong!

Hyrkan was holding the Crying Sword instead of the Deposed Prince’s sword. Hyrkan used the tip of the Crying Sword to destroy the Guardian Knight’s golden body, which had been beneath a layer of stone.

Choo-roong, choo-roong!

The Crying Sword let out a sorrowful cry as it was used like a pickaxe.

How long had he been working on this task?

“Uh?”

He was able to split open the Guardian Knight’s golden body, and the King’s Treasure saw the light of day.



‘Black b……No, is it a red box?’

It was the King’s Treasure. It was a Legendary Rank Ancient power.

10.

“In the end, we came back here again.”

Hatch swiveled his head as he spoke. He looked at the large ridge that blocked his line of sight. This large mountain range’s size was comparable to the Urugal mountain range. The ridge was covered with black trees. It was imposing, and it gave off an ominous feeling.

The name of the mountain was Black Comb.

It was a name meant to describe the dark peak of the mountain.

“It really is a Block Field.”

“I’m already well aware of that! You don’t have to tell me!”

Hahui shot her words toward Hatch. They had worked hard to find a path with no Block Field yet they had returned to the starting point. Hahui’s mood was already at its worst.



This was also true for Hatch.

“Yes, I see. You are so knowledgeable that you tried to hug a Werebear, because it was cute? Is that why you almost died?”

It seemed Hatch didn't want to lose. He fought words with words.

“Hey! You want to die?”

Their war of words continued on. There was only one person, who could stop these two from fighting, and Shir wasn't here right now. Since Shir wasn't here, the guild members didn't plan on stopping such an entertaining sight. They also didn't have the energy to intervene.

Several guild members even started a betting pool as they watched Hatch and Hahui fight.

“This time I'll bet 10 gold on Hatch.”

“I still think Hahui will win. I'll put 10 gold on Hahui's victory.”

The guild members started up a conversation with the fight as a background.

“The Barbarian King Quest is more complicated than expected.



We haven't been able to find any clues regarding the quest."

"The Golden Conch wants us to go east, and it wants us to cross the mountain. However, the Block Field prevents us from crossing it, and we keep being sent back to the starting point...."

"This means the Block Field has to be dismissed before we can follow the direction of the Golden Conch. This Quest is troublesome."

Hatch, who had been fighting Hahui with words, raised his hand towards her.

"How dare you!"

Hahui reacted negatively to the gesture.

"Yes, Queen."

Hatch ignored Hahui's words, and he answered the call.

Hahui immediately shut her mouth.

The power of Shir's call didn't ended there. When the call started, all the conversations in the surrounding stopped. They all tried to hear the conversation between Hatch and Shir.



“Yes. We weren’t able to cross the Black Comb again. The cause was the Block field, and we haven’t encountered any special Quest or Boss Monster. The only sure instruction we have is from the Golden Conch. It wants us to keep heading east, yet we can’t... It means there is another Quest that we’ll have to complete. This is separate from the Barbarian King Quest.”

As he was giving his report, a weird expression blossomed on his face.

Hatch quickly covered his mouth. He activated the Mute mode. It was a gesture that allowed a private conversation with the person on the other end of the Voice Talk.

“So you want me to talk to the First Head? Yes, I understand. If you want me to, I’ll do it. I’ll immediately go make preparations.”



# Chapter 171 – Bone Dragon (1)

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1.

“All right. I’ll do that. I’ll trade you a full Blood Ogre set and the Ingredients needed to make 3 Werebear Items. Do you want me to go to a different seller? Wait a moment. How much are you trying to get for that Item? If we are close, let’s consummate this trade. The Werebear drop Items haven’t been released on the market yet.”

Ahn-jaehyun used his index finger to reposition his glasses as he spoke. He lightly pushed up the nose pad of the glass, which had fallen to the bridge of his nose. As if a switch had been pressed, a furrow appeared on Ahn-jaehyun’s forehead.

“Please stop playing around. I called you to make a trade, yet you have the audacity to change the terms mid-call. That isn’t good manners.”

A sharp voice, which went well with his frowning face, came out his mouth.

“How about the Black Kobold King’s sword? It’s price has dropped recently, but you should know it can’t be purchased with a small sum. Anyways, that is my final offer for it..”

In the end, the earphone equipped on Ahn-jaehyun’s left ear buzzed.



“Ok. Let’s do this trade.”

After finishing the trade, Ahn-jaehyun immediately took off the earphone, and he threw it towards the mattress in anger.

“Fucking asshole!”

Accompanying the profane language, Ahn-jaehyun seethed within.

‘He is really acting high and mighty just from owning a level 190 No Name Skill Book. He is trying to take me to the cleaners! Fucking asshole!’

The level 190 No Name Skill Books were starting to trickle out in the market. Even the ridiculous price on the auction board was starting to fall drastically. In such a situation, Ahn-jaehyun had a good idea what the market price was for a level 190 No Name Skill book. This was why he suggested an Item exchange to the seller.

Ahn-jaehyun had decided to get rid of the Items not needed by the Skeleton Warriors. His Skeleton Warriors didn’t need it, but these Items were still popular amongst the Users. It was good enough to be used as bartering chips.

‘The Item Option dropped by the Werebear is pretty atrocious compared to the hunting difficulty, yet it is a level 220 Item....’



He had planned on using only the Items he didn't need as bartering chips, but once the negotiation started, he had to include the Item Ingredients dropped by the Werebears.

Ahn-jaehyun grinded his teeth.

‘I'm not talented at trading Items. It should have been equal value... It's all right. It's fine.’

It was an unexpected trade, but he didn't need any of the Items that was used as bartering chips. The only problem was the gold he could have gotten by selling these Items.

‘I must have lost my mind.’

Ahn-jaehyun became astonished as he balanced his account.

‘It is only a single Skill, yet I spent so much.... I've lost my mind. I'm sure of it.’

It was only a single skill. Moreover, he had no idea which Skill might come out of it, yet he had bought it for an incredible amount of money. It was something the original Rich Lich, Subrata Duta, would have done. It was something only an incredibly rich man would do.

‘Or maybe this game is crazy.’



Ahn-jaehyun looked at the V-Gear on the mattress.

‘This game is really nuts. Warlord is a well made game, but the other games don’t ramp up like this.’

After Warlord’s great success, many games were released to take over the throne held by Warlord, and there were several games vying for that spot. There had to be a basic sense of completeness for one to enjoy these kinds of games, and there were several games that were able to compete with Warlord by fulfilling this prerequisite. Moreover, there were some aspects of these games that were superior to Warlord.

These games weren’t able to increase their base population as quickly as Warlord, but they were successful in getting a large following. However, none of these games could reach a point where ridiculous money was being exchanged within. There weren’t any games where people went crazy over it.

Moreover, there will be none that would be able to capture the heart of the people in the future. Before Ahn-jaehyun came back to the past, Warlord had been considered a special game. It reigned over all games as the special one. There was an indescribable quality that existed within Warlord.

When he thought about the past, he couldn’t help, but sneer at himself.

‘The craziness right now is to my advantage.’



Before he returned to the past, this specialness of Warlord had been a pain for him. However, it was the opposite now.

Warlord was special, and the Hahoe Mask was special within Warlord. Ahn-jaehyun was doing unimaginable feats now.

Moreover, he would achieve greater feats in the future.

Ahn-jaehyun lay down on his mattress, and he immediately put on his V-Gear.

2.

It took over 20 days for Hyrkan to finish his Quest. When he returned to the Heard Fortress ruin town, it had developed a decent amount. It was hard to call it a town now. It was starting to resemble a castle.

‘It looks similar to the Cursed Castle.’

The transformation of the Heard Fortress ruin town was something he had seen before at the Cursed Castle. It was like the Cursed Castle regaining its name of Hiban castle, and the dignity that came with the process. Of course, there were several differences one could point out.

‘Shouldn’t they be making a statue of me here?’



However, the most important difference in Hyrkan's mind was the absence of a statue.

When the Cursed Statue transformed into the Hiban castle, the game erected a statue for the Noopi Family. The Heard Fortress ruin town was able to be established when Azell had defeated Anugas. However, the game was showing no signs of erecting a statue for the Hahoe Mask.

Of course, he wouldn't get any monetary gain from the formation of a statue. However, if they insisted on building one, he wouldn't turn down the opportunity. There was no reason why he would hate the idea.

“Tsk.”

He actually welcomed such gestures. He really liked the idea of leaving behind a permanent presence in this game.

Since he liked the idea, he felt a sense of disappointment.

‘They should have made me a park. How great would it have been if they erected a statue of me fighting Anugas? It would have looked cool and awesome.’

The Users, who were focused on Hyrkan's presence in the town, would have fainted if they found out about his inner thoughts.

“Hahoe Mask! Isn't that the Hahoe Mask.”



“Of course, it is the Hahoe Mask. No one would pretend to be the Hahoe Mask in the Black Continent. It would be the end for those, who were caught.”

“I heard five Users spying on him had their wrists cut off. I heard the hands were fed to the Skeletons.”

“How gruesome.”

“Is that the famous Watchman style? It is scary.”

The Hahoe Mask was the symbol of fear on the stage of Warlord. The Hahoe Mask didn't stand for hope and dream. Hahoe mask was known for taking out monsters and Users, who annoyed him. Even if it was a normal User, he was known to be ruthless if you mess with him.

The terrifying Hahoe Mask was mumbling about why the Warlord System wasn't building him a statue.

Who would have imagined such a thing?

‘Ah, I want a statue of myself.’

Hyrkan left behind the nervous crowd as he headed towards the Subjugation Association.



3.

In the Subjugation Association within the Heard Fortress ruin town, there was a stairway leading connecting the 3rd floor to the 4th floor. This was a stairway rarely used by Users and NPC, yet someone was using this stairway as a chair. He had a book open in his hands, and another book was placed next to him.

The identity of the User was Hyrkan, and the book was a Skill Book.

[The Skill Book has revealed itself.]

[Will you like to learn the Piercing Pocket Skill?]

Hyrkan had spent a significant capital in buy this level 190 No Name Skill Book, and the Skill turned out to be the Piercing Pocket.

‘Oh!’

Hyrkan was satisfied with the result.

In many ways, this Skill suited Hyrkan the most.

[You’ve learned the Piercing Pocket Skill.]



### [Piercing Pocket]

– Proficiency N/A

– Skill Description : You will be able to make space in your body. The only storage space once cannot open is at the head and chest.

It was as the Skill description said. The Piercing Pocket Skill's effect allowed him to use his body as a pocket or a bag. He'll be able to carry much more Items than before, and he didn't have to worry about losing them.

‘Oh right. I'm a Lich now.’

He was only able to learn this Skill, because he was a Lich.

His body was set up as that of a Lich. When he learned the Life Vessel skill, he had basically become an Undead. He was immune to Abnormal Status like bleeding. On the other hand, Healing type Skills couldn't be used on him. Moreover, the attacks that work against Undead monsters were effective against him too. He was treated like an Undead monster in the game.

His naked body was also different from the normal Users.

Like the normal Users, he always had his armor on, so no one knew about it. However, Hyrkan's Skin color was patchy since he



had used the Skin Sewing Skill. A hairy hide was sewn onto his left arm, and his right arm was covered with scale-like skin he took from a reptile. He couldn't display his Steel Bones, but his bones were also different from the normal Users. Then there were the black tattoos placed all over his body.

He had such an abnormal body, yet it was about to become something akin to a drawer. Users would think him crazy for doing this.

Even for people who pierced and tattooed their entire body would think he was abnormal.

However, Hyrkan was satisfied with this fact.

‘If I peel back the skin over my stomach to reveal a slot full of magic recovery candy... Wouldn't I be like Doraemon? It'll be awesome. Wait a sec. Will my belly button be used as a handle? What should I do about the handle?’

All these Skills made his outer appearance look unsightly, but they were the proof of his strength.

The passive effects that arose from the Skin Sewing and the Black Tattoos allowed him to be as strong as the Swordsman Class. Moreover, Skills like Steel Bones allowed him to have strong defense.

Since he would never hunt with a Priest, these Skills were a boon



to him.

‘Well, I should now....’

Hyrkan immediately took the second Skill Book into his hands. This was the Skill Book he received as a reward for the Archmage Boka Quest. He didn’t know the level of the Skill Book, and he also didn’t know what Skill it would give.

It was time for him to find out.

Depending on what came out of the Skill Book, he would have to resolve his next dilemma.

‘I have to decide if I should use the Legendary Rank Ancient Power to reinforce this new Skill.’

After passing the Ancient King’s test, he had opened up the body of the fallen Guardian Knights. Their bodies were like vaults, and he had found two boxes within. One was a black box, and the other was a red box. The black box had a black scroll for the Transcendent Rank Ancient Power. The red box held a red scroll for the Legendary Rank Ancient Power.

His dilemma started there.

The Transcendent Rank Ancient Power increased the performance of a Skill. He didn’t really have to worry about where to use this one.



However, the Legendary Rank Ancient Power changed the nature of a Skill. For example, if one used the Transcendent Rank Ancient Power on the Skeleton Fragment Skill, the Skeleton Warrior's stats and the number of Skeletons able to be summoned would be increased. On the other hand, if one used the Legendary Rank Ancient Power, a monster's bone could be used to summon non-bipedal Skeleton Warriors. Therefore, one could use a wolf's bone instead of a werewolf's bone to summon the Skeleton Warriors.

This was why he was struggling over the decision.

The Legendary Rank Ancient Power was incredibly hard to acquire. One had to put in 10 times the effort of acquiring a Transcendent Rank Ancient Power to gain the Legendary Rank Ancient Power.

However, the use of the Skill Enhancement didn't always end as a net positive.

To put it simply, it was good to reinforce a skill that was used as often as the Skeleton Fragment Skill. However, the result of the reinforcement could bring out surprising results.

He would be able to use Skeleton Wolf, Skeleton Bear, and Skeleton Snake as underlings. It would be amazing.

However, there was no other benefit to be gained from it.



Why was a Skeleton Warrior so strong?

In truth, the biggest reason why was the Armament Skill. Hyrkan was able to equip the Skeleton Warriors with Items that normal Users couldn't even dream about owning.

However, the Skeleton Wolf, Skeleton Bear, and Skeleton Snake couldn't benefit from effects of the Armament Skill. In conclusion, they wouldn't be able to use weapons.

It wasn't as if the Skeleton Wolf or the Skeleton Snake could swing a sword by carrying it in its mouth.

Instead, it would be more useful to use it on the Bone Explosives. If one used the Legendary Rank Ancient Power on the Bone Explosive Skill, one gained the Timer function. He had much more use for a timed bomb than a regular bomb.

'I planned on using it on the Skeleton Knights......'

Of course, the Skeleton Knight Skill was on top of his list. If one used the Legendary Rank Ancient power to reinforce the Skeleton Knight Skill, the Skeleton Knights would learn the Riding Skill. Moreover, they would gain Skeleton Steeds. They would be able to fight on a mount like the Death Knight.

This was why his heart was leaning towards reinforcing the Skeleton Knight Skill.



However, he didn't have to make the decision right now. It wouldn't be too late to decide after seeing what appears from this Skill Book.

‘Shall I open it?’

Hyrkan placed his palm on top of the Skill Book.

[The Skill Book has revealed itself.]

[Would you like to learn the Bone Dragon summon skill?]

‘Huh?’

Something ridiculous made its appearance.

4.

– It has been a while.

Hatch answered in an indifferent manner when he heard the tired voice of a man.

“It has been a while, but I'm not thrilled by this meeting. My back still hurts from the time when you stabbed it. You asked for our help, yet you used us as bait.



– We all acted in the name of our own interests.

“Do you realize how I was treated after being revealed as the traitor? If you knew what I went through, you wouldn’t be saying those words.”

– Do you want my apology?

“I’m not speaking to you, because I want to. I don’t care if you apologize or not. If you do give me one, I’m listening.”

– I’m sorry.

“All right. Let’s get down to business. Why did you, the First Head, want to talk specifically with me?”

At Hatch’s question, the Hydra guild’s first head hesitated before speaking.

– Hatch. Your former occupation...

“It seems you want to talk about the Game System. However, our Queen is a bit weak on that subject. I guess I’m the right person for this conversation.”

– How knowledgeable are you about the M.I. that manufactures and maintains Warlord?



At his question, Hatch couldn't help, but let out a mocking laugh.

“I probably know more than you?”

– Before Tobot Soft produced the M.I., the base A.I.....

“I also know more than you about that. I'll stop you there. I'm sure you were about to talk about the Pacman Program, but Pacman isn't the M.I.'s base. The M.I. was originally a management A.I. used in various field. The M.I. produced by the Tobo Soft used hybrid techniques from various field to test the performance of the M.I. The game we are enjoying right now arose from the Package Game Production software, and the Pacman Program was grafted onto the M.I. to make the final result. I guess I could describe it as a game production and management speciality M.I. If you want to continue listening to this explanation press 1. If you don't want to hear it, press 2. If you want to listen to it again, press #.”

– As expected, you are well versed on this subject.

Hatch hesitated when he heard Citrus' words. After hesitating, he spoke.

“So what do you want to speak to me about?”

– Warlord is a very well made game. It also has a Main Scenario Quest that evolves based on the User's actions and the progress of



the game. It was the first time such a system was attempted, and the product was surprisingly close to perfection. Do you know why this was possible?

“The developers refused to intervene and add in variables. Basically, it was the result of not ordering the A.I. around. This is also the reason why a proper event never appears in this game.”

At that moment, Hatch was going through his past memories. It wasn't a great memory. He went to work in the morning and he came back at night. He used to spend more time at his company than his home, and he hadn't been perverted enough to have enjoyed such a life.

“The M.I. would go crazy if it had to do events unrelated to the game story. It also won't add Event-only monsters or a party hat that celebrate the 3 year anniversary of the Warlord. It was the right move to stop any outside variables from being introduced into the game. However, the M.I. governing Warlord is only an early product. This was why they have the leeway for outside intervention and accidents. Did you call me to listen to this explanation? Really?

– According to our Quest information, the third Main Scenario Quest or the Quest after this one will be the last to the Main Scenario Quest.

“Uh whew. Thank you for letting me know such amazing news.”

Hatch wasn't surprised by Citrus' earnest words. He acted as if



his information was a given.

- When the Main Scenario Quest come to an end, this game will start its service like any other ordinary game.

“Aigo. You surprised me again.”

- It will no longer be a game where the game progress would be determined by the Users and the progress of the game. The production team would have to add new episodes and new stages. At that point, it'll merely be a game trying to extend its length of life.

However, Hatch didn't act disingenuous any more. There was no fun in making the same joke over and over again.

“You probably know this better than anyone else. So what do you really want to talk to me about?”

- I want us to slow down the progress of the Main Scenario Quest. Even if the popularity of Warlord would be maintained after the Main Scenario Quest ends, it wouldn't be like before. The biggest harm will come to the 30 great guilds, who has to operate a live channel. In truth, the speculative funds that were injected into the 30 great guilds have created a bubble.

“This isn't true for our guild. We have a sturdy backer.

- It is as I have said. Let us make an agreement not to progress in



the Main Scenario Quest at a breakneck speed. At the very least, you understand the reason behind why we should do this. It is also why I'm speaking to you. If I made this offer to the Storm Queen, it wouldn't take hold.

“That is true.”

For the first time in this meeting, Hatch decided to accept Citrus' words.

“So what do you want us to do?”

– I want you guys to ignore the Hahoe Mask.

Hahoe Mask.

When he heard that word, Hatch put on a serious expression for the first place. The smile on his lips was erased, and the his facial muscles stiffened.

– If you want to drag down the Hahoe Mask by his ankles, I welcome it. However, don't even think about using him as a piece on the chess board. We shouldn't fight and compete with each other for the prize with the Hahoe Mask nearby. That is all I want to say.

The call came to an end.



After the call ended, Hatch let out a long sigh.

‘The Hahoe Mask... This is driving me nuts. She is completely obsessed with him... It seem the Main Scenario Quest will come to an end soon. I should sell my Tobot Soft stocks.’



## Chapter 172 – Bone Dragon (2)

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5.

[Bone Dragon]

- Proficiency : Rank F
- Use : A Dragon Type monster has to be sacrificed for the Bone Dragon to be summoned.
- Miscellaneous : If you want a more detailed description of the skill, please open the Skill.

The description was very short, but it was enough to shock Hyrkan to no end.

‘This Skill really exists.’

Bone Dragon.

The Death Knight Summon Skill was akin to a blooming flower for a Necromancer. On the other hand, the Bone Dragon Skill was akin to a fruit. The Bone Dragon was a dream-like Skill.

It was described as dream-like, because there was no substance to it. No one had definite proof that the Bone Dragon Skill existed or not. Even the Rich Lich from before didn't have this information.



Of course, at the time, Hyrkan had been so desperate for money that he had bought lottery tickets for a chance to return to the game. During this period of time, level 300 and above Users had appeared. Moreover, the 3rd Advancement had appeared. The Bone Dragon Skill could have made its appearance then, but Hyrkan didn't have the interest or the luxury to pay attention to such information. Anyways, the Bone Dragon Skill wasn't present in Hyrkan's memories.

Yet, it had appeared right now.

‘The Skill Level is 230? Why is it so low?’

Moreover, he thought the Bone Dragon Skill was supposed to be a 3rd Advancement Skill. It was supposed to be a level 300 Skill, yet it had a level 230 requirement. It meant it was a 2nd Advancement Skill.

‘Was it always at this level?’

There were a good number of Skills that Warlord Users bypassed without realizing it. This was especially true with the unpopular Classes.

There was a level 230 Bone Dragon Skill in existence, yet it wasn't strange that no one knew about the Skill.

The Necromancer Class had gotten popular thanks to Hyrkan. Now 2 out of 10 Users picked the Necromancer Class. It was seen as



a promising Class, but this hadn't been true in the past. In the past, 1 out of 10 Users picked the Necromancer Class. Moreover, the Class was mostly chosen out of mistake or curiosity.

‘Well, since I received it, I should be thankful.’

Of course, Hyrkan didn't have to worry too deeply about the minute details of the Skill.

The most important part was that an amazing Skill had made its appearance.

Hyrkan immediately looked at the subsection. Unlike the other Skills, the Bone Dragon Skill's subsection was more substantive.

Moreover, several characteristics listed caught his eyes.

‘The Bone Dragon's Level is equal to the Monster's Level.’

One had to use Dragon type monster bones to summon the Bone Dragon, and when it was summoned, it would have identical Stats to the monster. Moreover, the Special Ability of the original monster couldn't be used. As expected, there would be a penalty for having a low Rank, but the Stats would go up as the Skill increased in Rank.

‘If I use the Boss Monster as Ingredient, the cost will be immense.’



Of course, if a Dragon type Boss Monster would be used as ingredient, the penalized basic Stats would still be immense. The best class of monster to summon was the Boss Monsters.

‘The Blaze Slime Dragon... It doesn’t have any bones.’

The Bone Dragon couldn’t use the Special Skills of the sacrificed monster, but it possessed its own Special Skills.

The most eye-catching feature was the Riding Skill.

‘I’ll finally be able to travel on a decent ride.’

In truth, the Riding Function was available on the Golem. Hyrkan had the Clay Play Skill ranked up to Rank A, so he could fly into the sky by using monsters like Wyverns as sacrifice.

‘That isn’t flight. It is just moving along the ground.’

The problem was the altitude!

The Wyvern Golem couldn’t fly high into the sky. At the same time, the process in getting it to fly and changing direction was unilaterally against the rider. It would allow one to move at the speed of a car on a highway at an altitude of 100 meters. However, if a problem occurs during the flight like being attacked by someone, one would free fall towards the ground. Since the



Golem's body was made out of stone, its ability to recover its balance and altitude was the worst.

If one wanted to use it, one could use it. However, it was more dangerous to use it in the hunting grounds than one would think. There would be some monster attacks, but the biggest danger were the Users. When most Users saw a flying Golem flying at low altitude, they would attack first and ask questions later. From Hyrkan's perspective, he would go nuts if he kept being attacked in such a manner.

It would be better to use a four-legged beast as ingredient. It was a more efficient and safer mode of travel. In truth, there wasn't much difference in using a Wyvern Golem and a Wolf Golem. The difference in arrival time wasn't that large.

'There is no way this one has that stupid altitude restriction, right?'

Of course, there was a chance that Bone Dragon's Riding Skill was similar in nature as the Golem's Riding Skill. Maybe, the Warlord System itself put a restriction on all flight by Users. This was a likely scenario.

'Acid Breath... It'll be able to use it at Rank B.'

Aside from the Riding Skill, the Bone Dragon had several skills it could use as its Rank increased. At Rank C, the Stats penalty was lifted. At Rank B, it gained the Acid Breath. At Rank A, it could use the Dragon's Fear.



‘There might also be two other additional skills.’

The two Special Skill for the Skeleton Knight like the Chivalry and Commander was gained through Skill Books. There was a good chance that he’ll be able to increase the Bone Dragon’s Skills through the same method.

‘There is still a lot of places where I have to spend money on.’

Hyrkan clicked his tongue in dismay when he thought about the money he had to invest to get the Chivalry and Commander skill.

“Huh?”

However, the worry for money was cleanly blown out of the water when he saw the fourth line in the subsection.

‘Wait a moment. What the hell is this?’

– Bone ingredients equal to a whole Dragon is needed to be able to summon the Bone Dragon.

‘What the hell?’

The most expensive Skill in Warlord had made its appearance.



6.

Ggoo-oh-oh!

The Bone Wyvern, which was only made out of bones, let out a cry. The forest was full of tall and thick trees, which was reminiscent of buildings. The Bone Wyvern started dropping towards the forest.

Shweeee!

It was like an arrow descending towards the ground after reaching its peak. Moreover, it was solely made out of bones, so the Bone Wyvern was angular. It led with its beak as it dived in a terrifying manner.

Poo-hwaht!

The leaves of the large trees were covering the ground like a roof, and the Bone Wyvern broke through as if it was breaking under the surface of the water. The target of the Wyvern's beak was the monster named Wood Devil. It was fighting a fierce battle with the Death Knight, Skeleton Knights, and the Skeleton Warriors.

The monster was 7 meters tall, and it was massive. It had the legs of a goat, and the body and head of an Orc. Moreover, it was made out of a mixture of dirt, rock and trees. The Wood Devil was a powerful monster.



It was only a mid-sized monster, but its difficulty rivaled the large monsters. Moreover, it also gave similar EXP as the large monsters.

The Bone Wyvern unhesitatingly drilled its beak towards the Wood Devil.

Puh-uhk!

Both the penetrator and the penetrated suffered a brutal cost from the collision.

The Wood Devil's head blew up like a watermelon. The Bone Wyvern's beak pierced through the head to lodge itself on top of the Wood Devil's shoulder.

The Wyvern was stuck, and it was in rough shape.

It was akin to throwing a boiled egg at a rock.

It became increasingly more bizarre when the two, who had suffered massive damages, displayed signs of life.

The Wood Devil didn't have anything that could be called a head, yet it plucked out the Bone Wyvern stuck on its body with its left hand.

Kwah-jeek!



It used its incredible grip strength to break the Bone Wyvern in half, and it threw the Bone Wyvern to the floor as if it was throwing away trash.

Poo-hwaht!

The Bone Wyvern had already been in rough shape, but now one couldn't even tell what it originally looked like. Amongst the wrecked body, the bones were showing signs of activity. The Bone Wyvern was trying hard to keep its body together, while it struggled in vain. It attempted to fix each bone one at a time.

As if it wanted to avenge its comrade, the Death Knight's Skeleton Steed rammed its head into the Wood Devil's body. The Death Knight swung down towards the headless Wood Devil as if it was splitting wood.

“Ah, really? What the hell!”

There was someone stuck to the back of the Wood Devil and this being was busily stuffing Bone Explosives into the monster's body. Hyrkan shouted in an annoyed voice.

‘Do you realize how much I paid for that!’

The Highwood Forest was located on the northern parts of the Black Continent.



It was a forest located on the outskirts of the Red Desert, and it was considered to be the most effective hunting ground to level up for Users over level 230. The difficulty in hunting the Wood Devil was high, but the EXP gained was high too.

However, Hyrkan was visiting the Highwood Forest, because of a quest.

‘Shit. The Bone Explosives, and the offerings for the Bone Dragon.... This is driving me nuts.’

When he found the trace left behind by the Archmage Boka in the Ancient King’s Tomb, he immediately received the quest called ‘Ancient King’s Artifact’. He had to meet the Blacksmith Olf to progress in the Quest.

Of course, he had no idea where the Blacksmith Olf was located at. This particular NPC never stayed in a single location. He had questioned everyone at the Subjugation Association, and he was able to locate a hint that said the Blacksmith Olf had crossed over to the Black Continent. He was told that the Blacksmith Olf was currently journeying towards the Red Desert.

Naturally, the Red Desert became Hyrkan’s destination, and the Highwood Forest was on the path towards the Red Desert. Of course, he would hunt earnestly as he traveled there.

The hunt was very good. The Wood Devils were as advertised. They guaranteed he would gain a really good amount of EXP. Moreover, the Ingredients dropped by the Wood Devils could be



used in producing Unique Rank Items. The monster had good EXP, and it was a money maker. His profit steadily rose as he caught this monster.

However, his profit was smashed into pieces as the Bone Dragon broke apart.

‘Shit!’

Bone Dragon.

It was a good Skill. The Bone Dragon allowed one to summon Wyverns and other miscellaneous Dragons. All these Dragon type monsters had excellent offensive capabilities.

However, problem arose from the fact that the summoned Bone Dragon was too reckless, and its Skill Rank was too low. Moreover, the level gap between the monster he sacrificed, and the monster he fought was too large.

‘I’m only catching a Wood Devil, so I can’t use the Bone Ingredients of a level 200 Boss Monster...’

For his first summon, he had used a level 170 monster called Gray Wyvern to summon the Bone Wyvern.

It wasn’t a low level monster.



The Gray Wyvern was still considered to be hard monster to kill in Warlord.

However, Hyrkan was currently hunting the Wood Devils, which were at level 240.

It was a 70 level gap. Moreover, since the Skill's Rank was F, his Bone Wyvern had received a Stat reduction penalty.

It all culminated to bring about the moment from a moment ago.

The Bone Wyvern had worked hard in its own way, and at times, it was quite effective. However, the Bone Wyvern had paid a price for its action.

This part of the equation was easy to accept, and it was understandable. He had used a level 170 monster as Ingredient, so it would have been strange if it was capable of taking down a level 240 monster.

The problem was the price.

‘Still, it cost me 1,000 gold to summon a Bone Wyvern. This is too much.’

This was the cost of summoning a Bone Wyvern.

In the case of the Gray Wyvern, it dropped 8 Ingredients where



one could make decent Items. If one added up the Bone Ingredients used in this venture, it was around 1,000 gold.

Actually, it wasn't that expensive. If one divided the 8 pieces, the Bone Ingredient needed to produce an Item came out to be around 120 gold.

It was a pretty low price for an Ingredient that was used to make an Item used by many level 170 Users.

However, it was a different story for Hyrkan. He had to buy a large quantity of the Ingredient, and it could only be used once.

‘So one summon was worth a supply of 100 Bone Explosives...’

It was worth 100 Bone Explosives.

Moreover, the Bone Dragon wasn't too compatible with the Death Knight's Undying skill.

It wasn't as if the Skill didn't work on the Bone Dragon. The sticking point was the special characteristic of the Undying Skill. The Undying Skill only worked if the Skeleton was near the Death Knight. However, the Bone Dragon regularly moved away from the effective range of the Undying skill.

This was the case right now.



The Wood Devil had extracted the Bone Wyvern, and it had thrown it outside of the range of the Death Knight's Undying Skill.

[Bone Wyvern has returned to earth.]

In the end, the Bone Wyvern failed to regenerate and recover. It returned to being dirt.

“Fuck this shit…….”

At that moment, his one thousand gold had turned into dirt.

The part that made his insides hurt more was the fact that he would have to repeat doing this. He had to invest a ridiculous amount of gold in order to increase the Bone Dragon Skill's Rank.

‘I never expected to lose money in this fashion.’

On the other hand, it strengthened his resolve.

‘I have to quickly take these bastards down, so I can make up for my loss.’

It flamed Hyrkan's desire to hunt down the Wood Devils.

It was reminiscent of the time he started this game for the first time.



7.

V&V, Big Smiles, Blossom, Sweepers and Moonlight guilds were the 5 guilds within the Five Stars guild. They had used their overwhelming number to extend a great deal of influence towards north and south of the Black Continent.

Their expansion was unlike the Stormhunters, who were simply using regions as hunting ground before they moved on. The Five Stars were now occupying and controlling the good hunting grounds they ran across. In recent days, the high level Users had gone past level 230, and the Highwood Forest was a very attractive hunting ground for Users, who were getting close to the higher level Users. It was a hunting ground worthy of controlling as one of the main hunting grounds.

The Highwood Forest was under the control of the Big Smiles guild.

Of course, it was practically impossible to govern a high level hunting ground with brute force. If the guild wanted to catch level 230 and above monsters, the guild's highest level Users had to be mobilized. Their main forces had to be brought forth. This was why the weak guild members couldn't be permanently stationed there to observe and control this region. The monitoring and management of the hunting ground was out of the question. The lower level Users were more likely be sent back through a special delivery called Game Over to the Heard Fortress ruin town by a passing Wood Devil.



In truth, this wasn't a location that was suitable for being managed. This wasn't a stage meant for the low level Users. The Users, who were able to frequent this place, had skills and a certain degree of fame. It was hard to talk or come to an arrangement with these Users. The guild would have to use a very big stick to be able to deliver a big punishment to those, who intruded in the forest.

– How long are we going to let the Hahoe Mask operate in the Highwood Forest?

However, there was a User where none of the normal conventions worked.

He was a high level User, and words didn't work on him. Moreover, he wouldn't consider cutting any deals, and the big stick approach also didn't work on him. He didn't have a guild that could be pressured, and no forms of pressure seems to work on him.

“We've already decided internally not to mess with the Hahoe Mask... Didn't you agree about that part, Mr. Heh-bibin?

– Still, there should be a limit to our patience. The Highwood Forest is our main hunting ground under our management!

Hahoe Mask.

He ignored all authority as he hunted in the Highwood forest. Moreover, he wasn't just hunting there.



– Moreover, the Hahoe Mask is flaunting the fact that he is hunting at the Highwood Forest!

He is hunting out in the open!

It was as if he was advertising himself!

– The video he uploaded, in regards to the Highwood Forest, just went past 10 million views. It just took a single day!

To make things worse, the Hahoe Mask had uploaded a video of himself hunting inside the Highwood Forest. He had uploaded it the next day with minimal editing.

The Hahoe Mask was a youtube star that could gain millions of views just from uploading a simple video of Skeletons dancing inside the game. He was the mega star of Warlord.

He was such a figure, so there was no way his Wood Devil hunting video would have a low view count. It was popular enough to breeze past 10 million views in a single day.

Moreover, as the Hahoe Mask's success continued, the Big Smiles guild looked more and more inept. They had touted the Highwood Forest as being under the strict control of the Big Smiles, so of course, they came out looking ridiculous from this situation.



– You have to look at the comments below the Hahoe Mask’s recent Highwood Forest hunting video. About half of the comments are ridiculing the Big Smiles.

As a sub-guild master of the Big Smiles, this was the reason why he was angry.

In truth, Heh-bibin didn’t want to pay attention to the Hahoe Mask anymore.

Didn’t he always take a loss every time he messed with the Hahoe Mask?

This was why he hadn’t disagreed when the guild made an internal policy not to interfere with the Hahoe Mask.

However, the current situation was a whole different matter.

– We are one of the 30 great guilds. We are China’s greatest guild. If we allow the Hahoe Mask to treat us like this, we’ll suffer incalculable damage.

He didn’t care if a crazy dog barked out in the yard. He didn’t care if the crazy dog was ignored. However, if the crazy dog entered the house to make a mess, it was a completely different story.

Heh-bibin’s words weren’t wrong. When Sinclair heard his words, he agreed with Heh-bibin’s words.



“I understand. However, the risk is too high. If we want to catch the Hahoe Mask right now, we would have to shift a significant portion of our troops present here on the Black Continent.”

It wasn't as if they couldn't catch the Hahoe Mask. The Hahoe Mask was amazing, but in the end, he was alone. If they wanted to, they would be able to kill him.

– Sinclair. You...

“So you want me to go out and fight the Hahoe Mask? Is that what you are trying to say to me?”

In the end that was the sticking point. It was the price one needed to pay to kill the Hahoe Mask. A frightening cost had to be paid to catch a terrifying genius of Solo Play. Even if one was willing to pay the price, it would be a problem. If one paid the price, someone had to sign the receipt. If the receipt printed out a loss, the one that signed the receipt would have to be responsible for that loss.

“Policy is policy. I won't mess with the Hahoe Mask.”

– I can't believe those words came out of your mouth, Killer.

“The Five Stars agreed to it, and the Hydras guild also agreed to it. We don't touch the Hahoe Mask.”



– Sinclair. While you were with the Hands guild, you were a User on par with the Matador Chev and the Storm Queen Shir. If there was an obstacle, you broke through it. You used your Skill in the shadow, and many lamented this fact. This was why many guilds had sent you love calls.

Sinclair could clearly see this venture would come out at a loss, so he didn't want to sign the receipt.

No, to be precise, he couldn't do it.

His employer, who had hired him, wouldn't allow it.

– This is why I'm curious. What decision would the Matador or the Storm Queen make right now?

“I'll accept your words as a compliment.”

Sinclair ended the call with Heh-bibin after he got in the last word.

‘Heh-bibin's real aim is for me to fall at the hands of the Hahoe Mask. He want my influence to lessen.;

After ending the call, Sinclair let out a bitter laugh.

Sinclair could guess why Heh-bibin had tried to bait him. Heh-bibin wasn't really trying to punish the Hahoe Mask. When the Big



Smiles reformed with Sinclair as the centerpiece, Heh-bibin had become isolated within the guild. He needed a plan that will reverse his fortune. Sinclair was well aware of this fact.

‘Shit.’

This was why he had turned down the request.

“Shit.”

Currently, Sinclair tried to convince himself that this was why he had turned down the request.



## Chapter 173 – Bone Dragon (3)

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8.

‘Let’s see....’

Ahn-jaehyun, who had been looking at his Tablet PC, repositioned the glasses on his face. Then he started flicking his finger on the Tablet PC.

“I spent 3,223 gold for magic recovery Items, 2,550 gold for health recovery Items, and 10,000 gold for Bone Ingredients....”

He already had a rough estimate on how much he had spent, but the calculation was concluded faster than expected. The final total hadn’t come out yet, but Ahn-jaehyun stopped moving his finger.

“Ah.”

In the end a very soft and spiritless sigh came out of his mouth. It was a wretched sound.

‘This is driving me nuts.’

He was having a hard time letting out a sigh. Afterwards, the words he was about to say got stuck in the back of his throat. Ahn-jaehyun could only complain and moan about his problems with a small voice inside his head.



In the end, his fermenting discontent led to annoyance.

‘Bone Dragon... How can they only made such expensive Skills?’

It had been 10 days since the Hahoe Mask hunted inside the Highwood Forest, which was under Big Smiles’ management.

‘It isn’t as if I could abstain from using it, since I have to increase the Skill Rank... I caught so many Wood Devils, yet I came out at a loss.’

For the past 10 days, the Hahoe Mask’s hunt to level up had proceeded very smoothly. It wasn’t just smooth. He had worked at peak efficiency. In 10 days, he had raised 4 levels, and he had reached Level 235. Before he returned to the past, Hyrkan had worked with the Hahoe Mask guild to level up. It took them 31 days for him to go from Level 230 to Level 240. His current Level Up speed was ridiculous.

However, the drain on his money was as fast as his Level Up speed.

“Shit. Was this Skill really made with the intention of Users using it?”

Of course, the main culprit of his loss was the Bone Dragon Skill.



In their own ways, the Skeletons under the Hahoe Mask was great at eating money, but the Bone Dragon Skill was on a whole different level compared to the Skeletons. He had to dress, decorate and feed the Skeletons.

It felt like pouring water into a jug with a hole at the bottom. The Bone Dragon Skill made him feel as if he was pouring the water straight onto the floor.

The scarier part was the fact that he hadn't really even started using this Skill yet.

‘The current level 200 Dragon Type Boss Monster is called the Crypt Dragon. If I wanted Bone Ingredients equal to a whole Dragon... Seventy thousand gold.’

This was the real deal.

When one went over Level 200 mark to find a large Dragon Type Boss Monster, the price jumped up to a whole different level. This was especially true for the Dragon Type Boss Monsters that were in the large category.

On the high side, the Skill could require around 100 Bone Ingredients. Of course, the price to gather such a high number of Ingredient Coins was exorbitant.

Moreover, the Bone Ingredients one paid for an exorbitant price dissipated when the battle ended. When he thought about it, his



body shook.

After his body stopped shaking, Ahn-jaehyun decided to stop worrying about it.

‘First, let me worry about increasing the Skill Rank. The terrifying problem of.... Let’s ignore it for now.’

If he worried about it right now, it would only lead to a stomach ulcer.

Ahn-jaehyun once again started to tap at the Tablet PC’s screen. He restarted the calculation he had stopped a moment ago.

‘If I want to buy additional Consumable Items, and the Ingredients for the Bone Dragon.... I’ll have to purchase around 100,000 gold. I’m spending my gold much faster than expected. I purchased 100,000 gold not too long ago.’

Then he started to worry once again.

‘The transaction fee involved in swapping 100,000 gold... It’ll be higher than what I spend on food each month.’

“.....Uh-whew.”

At that moment, Ahn-jaehyun gave up on his calculations.



9.

The Bone Wyvern flapped its wing as it landed at the Heard Fortress ruin town's main square. Its wings were made out of bones, so it didn't cause the winds to stir. The Bone Wyvern was pretty large, but the landing process was quieter than expected. However, the commotion it caused in its surrounding wasn't quiet at all.

“What the hell is that?”

“Is it a NPC?”

“The Wyvern Delivery NPC possesses a Bone Dragon too? Doesn't it normally use 5 normal Wyverns?”

The Users in the square caused a large commotion, and it caused the other Users to gather. They came to see what the fuss was about. When the Users were about to converge into a mass resembling a cloud, a User descended from the back of the Bone Wyvern. This user used the Bone Wyvern's bones as handholds. The User was wearing pouches and bags, which were filled to bursting, like clothes.

When the crowd recognized the User's face, it created a ripple within the crowd.

“Hahoe Mask?”

The restless energy within the crowd was akin to when a



celebrity exited an expensive sports car. As the crowd became excited, Hyrkan's shoulders were pulled back in pride.

‘Yes, this is what it is all about.’

In a short amount of time, Hyrkan had used the Bone Wyvern's Riding Skill to fly from the Highwood Forest to the Heard Fortress ruin town. Moreover, this was the first time the crowd had seen a User use a Bone Wyvern as a mode of transportation.

This was obvious, but Hyrkan had expected such a reaction.

‘As expected, a man is all about the car.’

He had worried about the Riding Skill, but the Bone Dragon flew pretty well in the air. It was impossible to do any tricks in the air, but it was much better than the Wyvern Golem made using the Clay Play Skill. It could fly much higher, and it was a much safer ride.

Of course, it was a great mode of transportation, but a high cost came with this convenience.

[The Bone Wyvern has returned to the earth.]

Accompanying the System Announcement, the Bone Dragon collapsed into a white pile of dust. The dust from the bone was so fine that a small breeze, which couldn't be felt by the Users, scattered it into the surrounding.



The strength that had kept Hyrkan's shoulder and neck tense also dissipated.

‘Ah, my 200 gold...’

When the Riding Skill was used to travel a long distance, the Bone Dragon disappeared as soon as one arrived at the destination. Basically, it meant the long distance travel using the Bone Dragon Skill was a one-off Skill. It wasn't even a round trip. It travelled only one way.

Thankfully, he could use the lowest flight-capable Dragon Type monster. It was a level 90 normal Wyvern. This was why he only burned 200 golds on this flight.

Of course, he said it was merely 200 gold, but if he converted to real money, it was the price of an airplane ticket.

This was why his back look strangely bleak as he head towards the Item Storage center.

10.

At the Item Storage center, a room was provided, so a User could always change one's Item Setting in privacy. It was there as a considerate gesture for the Users. It allowed one to put Items into the Slots, and when one yelled for the Slot On of the Items, one could see how one looked liked. Of course, one would look silly if



one kept yelling out Slot On deep within a forest just to check how one looked in an equipment. This was why this room was provided.

Hyrkan was within such a room with his equipments off. He was standing inside wearing only his underwear, and the his body looked bizarre.

It was reminiscent of the Frankenstein. His arms and legs looked like it was patched together, and tattoos covered his whole body.

Hyrkan grabbed the flesh of his left side like a handle. When he pulled on his skin, the flesh around his stomach opened up like a door. It revealed a six-sided space that was akin to the inside of a safe.

‘I’ll put the health recovery Items and Buff Items inside my stomach.....’

Hyrkan stacked the consumables he had bought into his stomach. He kept putting in Items until there was no available space.

Then he moved on to his thighs.

‘The left will hold the Skeleton Fragments, Bone Explosives, Bone Spear... The other side will hold the offerings for the Bone Dragon.’

He opened his right thigh first then he opened the left. He put



Items into the available space. Afterwards, he meticulously put in Items into his arms and even his palms. It was as if he was replacing his bones with Items.

After finishing his work, he manipulated his wristwatch. It took only 2 seconds for his bare body to be equipped with heavy armor.

Hyrkan's work wasn't done yet. There were Item storage pouches placed in various location of the Dark Spot set, and he started filling them with consumable Items.

He also filled his bag and pockets.

“Hoo-ooh.”

Hyrkan could breathe easily only after he had finished his work... This task had taken him 20 minutes.

After he let out a sigh, a bitter smile hung around Hyrkan's lips.

‘I paved the road in front of me with money.’

Every User thoroughly prepared for a hunt and quest by purchasing consumable Items. However, there was no other Users that was as thorough in his preparation in regards to consumable Items like Hyrkan. Hyrkan's preparation was meticulous, and the consumable Items he used were overly expensive.



‘Currently, I’m probably the most expensive being walking inside Warlord.’

Just the cost of the Items on his body could be measured in the hundred thousands.

It didn’t end there. None of Hyrkan’s Items present in his slots were cheap Items.

Moreover, He possessed Unique Items that most of Warlord didn’t have like the Circlet of Purification and Anugas’ Necklace. On top of it all, a good number of his main Items were bound, and he wouldn’t lose any of them if he had his wristwatch stolen. On the other hand, this meant that if someone did manage to steal Hyrkan’s wristwatch, the probability of the Circlet of Purification and the Anugas’ Necklace dropping was high.

It was as Hyrkan had said. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that the most valuable character one could catch in Warlord was Hyrkan.

‘I’m such a tempting target, yet the Big Smiles is leaving me alone. It doesn’t make any sense.’

The Big Smiles guild had left Hyrkan alone.

From time he started hunting inside the Highwood Forest, he had been curious about their absence.



In truth, Hyrkan hadn't planned on hunting for 10 days within the Highwood Forest. If he could do it, it would have been great. However, he had thought the Big Smiles guild wouldn't allow him to hunt in an important region under their control. He had been sure that the Big Smiles would have mobilized their forces to interfere with Hyrkan's hunt.

This was why he had been bold and visible in the beginning. He started earnestly hunting down the monsters in plain sight.

The Hahoe Mask displayed his full might as if he was advertising himself, and from the Big Smiles guild's perspective, they would have to make thorough preparations to hunt down the Hahoe Mask. Naturally, this preparation would take time, and it would have given the Hahoe Mask the time to hunt a little bit longer.

This was why he allocated 3 days for his hunt.

He would hunt for 3 days within the Highwood Forest, and when the Big Smiles guild interferes within him, he would give up the hunt. He would have crossed over into the Red Desert.

However, the opposite of his expectation occurred. The Big Smiles guild didn't even sniff near Hyrkan. They didn't show any indication that they will attempt to catch him. As time passed, Hahoe Mask's exploits and activities increased. The ridicule and criticism against the Big Smiles were getting louder. However, they treated Hyrkan as if he didn't exist.

'This course of action worries me more.'



If it came to it, he was ready to fight the Big Smiles guild. However, when the Big Smiles guild stayed silent, it frightened him.

However, it was also the reason why he had firmed his resolve.

‘These guys aren’t the kinds of bastards that would stay put doing nothing.’

When the calm before the storm was long, the destructive power of the storm was stronger.

There was no need for him to overstay his welcome at the Highwood Forest. There was no reason why he should stay until he triggered a trap laid out by the vindictive Users of the Big Smiles guild.

‘Well, if I go into the Red Desert, I don’t have to worry about facing the Big Smiles for a while.....’

Since he had tweaked the nose of the Big Smiles guild, he had to go to the Red Desert as soon as possible.

The Red Desert was north of the Highwood forest, and it was a region officially given up by the Big Smiles guild. They didn’t hunt, manage, and search inside the Red Desert. It wasn’t just the Big Smiles guild. All of the Five Stars guild had given up searching the Red Desert.



It was a highly dangerous region. It wasn't even known what types of monsters appeared inside this region. There were no information on what characteristics these monsters possessed.

The only thing confirmed was the fact that it was more difficult than the Highwood Forest! It was assumed to be a level 250 hunting ground.

Of course, the Red Desert was filled with more dangerous beings than the mediocre members of the Big Smiles guild.

Moreover, Hyrkan would have to meet a Warlord NPC known to be very unfriendly towards the Users. The Blacksmith Olf did whatever the hell it wanted, and he had no clues on its location. He just knew the NPC was somewhere inside the Red Desert. He had to find the NPC with just this information.

‘If I could end this game, I really would just end it.’

It was a pipe dream, so Hyrkan's mind boggled at the thought. He fixed the Hahoe Mask on his face.

11.

“If things continue this way, wouldn't we become a laughing stock?”



At Heh-bibin's words, Apollo didn't move his pouting lips. Heh-bibin spoke to him again.

"In all fairness, you are the master of this sub-guild now. The only thing holding me back from moving on is the big picture for this guild. The Big Smiles guild is basically your guild now. Moreover, don't you want revenge on the Hahoe Mask?"

".....Sinclair didn't budge. How are we going to kill the Hahoe Mask?"

Apollo finally broke his silence, and Heh-bibin looked at Apollo with a hardened expression instead of answering the question.

There was a brief silence, and Heh-bibin didn't show any signs of wanting to talk.

"I want to catch the Hahoe Mask. I want to kill that bastard."

As if he couldn't take the silence, Apollo spoke with anger in his voice.

Heh-bibin took a peek at Apollo. Several thoughts flitted through his mind.

'As I thought, the answer was to poke Apollo.'

When this thought went through his mind, Heh-bibin tried hard



to push down the smile that was trying to break out on his face.

“We are of like mind. If the Big Smiles guild allows the Hahoe Mask to act with impunity, it’ll damage us greatly. At the very least, you and I should stand together.”

“However, we don’t have a plan ! If it isn’t Sinclair, who’ll be able to go toe-to-toe with the Hahoe Mask?”

Apollo reacted in a very temperamental manner. If one considered Apollo’s personality and his past relationship with the Hahoe Mask, it was a predictable reaction. There was no reason why Apollo would be happy about this topic.

“Even if we don’t have a User of the same caliber to confront him, there is no reason why we can’t kill him if we go in large numbers. If we decide to catch him, we’ll be able to.”

“We couldn’t catch him after sending 1,000 of our Users.”

“Wasn’t it, because the Stormhunters guild interfered with us? If we think about it logically, even the Hahoe Mask can’t fight a force of 1,000 Users.”

“I’ve heard those words before.”

“We have to hunt him in a way where we’ll turn a profit. Even if we send 100 or a 1,000 Users, we’ll turn a profit. The Hahoe Mask is basically the most expensive monster in Warlord.”



“If we send a thousand User, he’ll avoid them. Hahoe Mask isn’t dumb. This is how he handles such situations.”

Heh-bibin shut his mouth again.

“Moreover, the bastard doesn’t have a guild, party, team or even a family! It is impossible to threaten him by kidnapping someone near him. So how are we supposed to pin him down? In recent rumors, it is said he travels by riding a Bone Wyvern. He can fly now, so how can we catch him?”

At that moment...

“Ah.”

Apollo had an idea. When he had this idea, he had a dazed expression on his face.

“Now that I think about it, there is one User, who’s close to the Hahoe Mask.”

Apollo’s dazed expression turned into a bloody smile.



# Chapter 174 – Red Desert (1)

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[This place is north of the Highwood Forest where the Wood Devils appear. It is called the Red Desert. Until now, no one has able to approach this unknown region.]

A User appeared within the footage. After he gave a brief explanation, the User turned to look at the Red Desert spread behind him. Then he pointed towards what he was seeing.

[It feels like I'm on mars. However, this place has a characteristic that is more interesting than its appearance. Please look over here.]

The view was tilted downwards towards the floor. One could see the feet of the man standing atop the red sands. The man stomped with his foot as if he was knocking on the floor.

When one watched the footage, one would expected the desert or the sand box to let out a soft sound when the foot came down.

Tahng tahng!

However, the red sand beneath the User's foot made a sound akin to what a steel would make.

The man didn't end his actions there. He quickly unsheathed his sword from his waist, and he stabbed his sword towards the ground. The sword descended fast, and after letting out a violent sound, only the tip of the sword penetrated between the grains of



sand.

[As you can see, this place is a desert. However, when you operate in this region, you should treat this place as a world made out of concrete. This holds true for the rest of the Red Desert you can see right now. These sands look like they are flowing like river water, but in truth, it could be treated as a very light layer of sand moving atop a material akin to concrete. This is a game. It is an awesome setting for one to experience in a virtual reality.]

The User finally appeared in full inside the footage, and the man started to move. The screen started to move with the man. The man walked towards something large, and he stopped in front of it.

There was a snake in front of the man. It was an enormous snake, and the snake looked bizarre in several ways. Snakes usually had scales that looked slick with oil, but this snake's skin looked very hard. It looked like a bug's carapace, and the glossy sheen made it look like an exoskeleton. However, the most surprising part was the fact that the snake's body was half buried in the sand.

The User opened his mouth again.

[However, if you decide to hunt here, the awesome setting I described earlier is actually a very horrific setting. Wait until this guy comes out or please run away. If you are pulled below the ground, prepare yourself for a vacation. The Tankers have to on alert.]



In a flash, the mood within the footage changed. The screen started to shake as if it was really being filmed by a handheld camera.

[Shit! It appeared again!]

[Prepare for battle! Prepare for battle!]

[Don't get dragged in! The Tankers have to be especially vigilant!]

Within the shaking footage, desperate voices could be heard. After a while, the footage stabilized, and the User spoke directly to the viewers watching the video.

[I'll end it here. This is Big Smiles guild's Sinclair.]

The video ended.

Hyrkan, who had been caught up by the video, was finally able to freely move his gaze. Hyrkan moved his gaze as he lifted his head to look in front of him. Hyrkan saw the same monster from the video right in front of his eyes. The Sand Snake's corpse had been dismantled, and it was in the process of slowly melting away.

Ddul-goo-ruhk, ddul-goo-ruhk…….

There were two Skeleton Knights on Skeleton Steeds around the Sand Snake. They looked forbidding as they moved slowly. It



looked as if they were on guard. Both of the Skeleton Knights were showing a bold front, yet Hyrkan didn't feel good looking at them. His foul mood was inevitable.

‘The Skeleton Knight was taken down in a single...’

When he arrived at the Red Desert, it was as if the Sand Snake had been waiting for Hyrkan. He immediately came across the most famous monster inside the Red Desert.

Hyrkan decided to answer the Sand Snake's welcome. He gave it Skeleton Fragments as gifts for coming into its house.

The battle itself wasn't too bad. The Sand Snake's exoskeleton was hard as it looked. On the other hand, the monster didn't have any Special Abilities. The Skeleton Warriors were trained well enough to fight in a melee with the Sand Snake. Then there were the Skeleton Knights strengthened using the Legendary Rank Ancient Power. With the help of the Skeleton Knights on their Skeleton Steeds, the Sand Snake wasn't a difficult opponent.

Moreover, the [Corrosive Ghost] Skill effect worked very well on this monster. Hyrkan had a Transcendent Rank Ancient Power leftover inside his storage, so he had used it on the [Skeleton Science] Skill. The [Corrosive Ghost] Skill had become much stronger, and it quickly weakened the exoskeleton of the Sand Snake. Thanks to the recently purchased [Cursed Doll] Skill, it was easy to inflict the Curse.

The early portion of the battle was so easy that it made Hyrkan



surprised.

‘Of course, there is nothing easy inside this game.’

In a flash, the Sand Snake suddenly grabbed onto the Skeleton Knight. After biting the Skeleton Knight, who was wailing away at the Sand Snake, the ground sunk inwards. The Skeleton Knight was killed.

Instantaneous Death.

Results that usually never happened to his Skeleton underlings occurred.

Afterwards, he entered into another battle with a Sand Snake. In the process, two Skeleton Warriors suffered the same fate as the Skeleton Knight.

‘I get what they were trying to do. Still, the Skeleton Knight atop the Skeleton Steed is immense. How does it make any sense that it could be dragged underground like that?’

After assessing the battle again, Hyrkan clicked his tongue in dismay.

This wasn’t an insignificant loss that could be glossed over.

Hyrkan couldn’t summon the Skeleton Knights indefinitely. The



Skeleton Knight suffering an instantaneous death was a very big loss for him.

‘I think the Golems might be the only ones that can tank the Sand Snake.’

Of course, he had to change his tactics from the norm. He couldn't use the Skeleton Knights as hybrid Tankers and Strikers. For tanking, he would have to send out a big Golem.

‘My magical consumption would be too large.’

In the end, that was the problem.

Hyrkan didn't use the Golems as his main troops not, because they were weak. The Golems were strong. However, the cost of summoning was too large to use them against normal monsters. Basically, if one took out a Golem in a fight where one Skeleton Knight would suffice, one was killing a chicken with a butcher's knife meant for a cow.

Moreover, everything Hyrkan did here was costing money. It wasn't as if there was an infinite number of consumables he could use. If his consumption was too fast, it would restrict the number of hours he could operate here.

Hyrkan looked up at the sky.

‘I can't fly around....’



The best option would be to fly on the Bone Wyvern without getting into any battles as he looked for his destination. However, Warlord didn't permit such an easy method.

The Riding Skill could be used only if one had a destination in mind. The destination had to be a colonized region like the Heard Fortress ruin town.

Of course, it was ok to mount it. However, it was impossible to control it. In the case of the Bone Wyvern, it just stood on the ground during non-combat situations. It only moved when the battle started. Moreover, it was suicide to ride a Bone Wyvern into a battle.

This was why he had to walk around this place.

‘Shit.’

Of course, he would have to continue to walk. He would have to leave behind his footprints on this hell-like Red Desert.

Hyrkan, who had been looking up at the sky, lowered his head.

‘Yes. Let's see who wins.’



[Your level has increased.]

[The Skill Proficiency for the Iron Golem Skill has risen to Rank D.]

[The Skill Proficiency for the Bone Dragon Skill has risen to Rank D.]

The Level Up Announcement was heard, but the Announcement didn't register in Hyrkan's ears.

‘Battle Completed!’

Hyrkan ignored the Red Scorpion he had just caught. He turned his head, then he started to run.

He just ran.

“Fucking hell!”

As Hyrkan ran, harsh cuss words flowed out his mouth. A forest was seen far into the distance.

‘I've finally found it!’

It was a forest filled with trees that rivaled ones seen in the Highwood Forest. This forest was beyond being silent. It felt dreary. It welcomed the visitors with an atmosphere that was quite



different from the Red Desert.

‘If I hadn’t found this today, it would have driven me nuts.’

He had spent 10 days within the Red Desert, and he spent to extra days in locating this place. This was his first success on this trip.

The hardship endured by Hyrkan for the past 12 days was beyond imagination. The environment tested the Users in a different way. It didn’t allow for breaks, and one had to be always vigilant. The time spent inside the Red Desert felt longer. A 10 minute span spent inside the Red Desert felt twice as long as any other region.

Moreover, he had found his target destination only when the Consumable Items stored in his body was almost all gone.

If he hadn’t found the location today, he had no choice, but to head back. Of course, Hyrkan’s eyes were about to flip over at his current situation.

‘All right. I don’t care what comes out. Even if it is a Zombie, I’ll kiss it!’

Hyrkan approached the forest with a happy heart, and Hyrkan was able to have his long awaited encounter.

“Do not approach this place dead human. I’ll forgive your trespass only once. If you return to this place again, even your corpse won’t survive the encounter.”



It was an Elf with red colored skin.

[You've gained the title 'The First to Encounter the Red Elf Tribe'.]

[Quest 'Elf's Artifact' has started.]

'Fucking hell!'

Hyrkan's headlong charge, which even Anugas wasn't able to stop, came to a full stop at this moment.

3.

Poohk!

A sword was lodged within the Voodoo Lizardman's neck like an axe embedded in wood. The Voodoo Lizardman's body shook.

However, the only ally of the Voodoo Lizardman couldn't give any help.

"We've cleared the Zombies!"

"You just have to kill that one now."



There were two other Users. A man and a woman cleared the Zombies. Surprisingly, all 10 Zombies had been summoned. The last Zombie was killed, and none of the Zombies were able to repair itself.

The User kept his sword lodged inside the Voodoo Lizardman, but when he heard their words, he retrieved his sword. He stopped prolonging the fight.

Poo-hwaht!

Blood sprayed out from the Voodoo Lizardman's neck.

Goo-roo! Goo-roo!

The sound of its dying breaths could be heard.

Puhk!

As the User retrieved his sword, he kicked the ankle of the Voodoo Lizardman with his foot. It fell in an instant. Before the fallen Voodoo Lizardman could let out a cry through its opened mouth, the tip of the sword fell.

Poohk!

This strike allowed the ragged Voodoo Lizardman to meet its



death.

When the short death cry ended, the three Users all heard the same Announcement.

[You've killed the 100th Voodoo Lizardman.]

[You've fulfilled the requirement for the Quest 'Barley Tribe's Request'.]

The two Users raised both their hands into the air when they heard the Announcement.

“We've finally caught 100 of them!”

“I really thought this Quest was ridiculous, but we've finally finished it! Ooh-ha-ha!”

The two Users looked very happy. Whistling, who had killed the Voodoo Lizardman, let out a happy smile. His face was harsh, so even his smile looked very scary. He looked at the two with the smile on his face. It wouldn't have been rude to flinch backwards, since his smile was terrifying. However, the two had seen his smile before, so they were unsurprised.

“Shall we go immediately?”



“We should go immediately!”

The two Users were like dogs running over to Whistling to beg for a walk.

Whistling spoke to the two.

“Let’s rest a little bit.”

“Then we’ll butcher our kills.”

“You dismantle the Zombies. I’ll dismantle the Lizardman.”

“Hey. Why do I have to be stuck with such an unpleasant task?”

“Did you forget I’m a Crusader? The Undead monsters melt at my touch.”

“That reason is valid only during our hunts. It has no effect during the dismantling.”

“Eh-ee. Let me live out my character. If I was in a fantasy novel, the zombies would melt at my touch, and the loot would disappear.”

“You’re nuts.”



The two ignored Whistling, who was in front of them. They bickered with each other then they turned their heads away as they dismantled the corpses.

Whistling had a light smile on his face as he watched them.

‘They are an interesting duo.’

Whistling thought about the day when he met those two for the first time.

‘I never expected to find people like me inside the Hydra guild.’

The memory started when the Fighters guild were purchased by the Hydra guild. At that time, the mood within the Fighters guild was celebratory. Most of the Fighters guild members would be immediately inducted into one of the 30 great guilds, so very few Users had complaints.

Whistling was one of the few, who was troubled by the move. He started to think about whether he should leave the Hydra guild or not.

He didn’t have any negative feelings towards the Hydra guild. However, their policy was the problem. Whistling had been given a very long leash inside the Fighters guild, but he didn’t think the Hydra guild would give him the same type of freedom.

Moreover, he didn’t think the Hydra guild would leave an asset



like him alone.

However, the Hydra guild gave a proposal to Whistling before he could speak to them.

The Hydra guild had Quest Task Forces within its rank. If Whistling wanted to, he could pursue the Quests of his choice. Moreover, they would give him full cooperation at a guild level, which will allow him to quickly progress in his Quests.

Whistling thought over it, and he gave his answer.

He decided to try it out!

If he didn't like it, he could always leave the guild at a later time!

This was when he met the two Users in front of him. One was a Monk, who had gone through 2nd Advancement, to become a Crusader. His name was Yojori. Then there was Joba. After going through her 2nd Advancement, she had chosen the Class of Magic Swordsman. It was a Class that was as rare as the Lich.

These two Users were in the same category as Whistling.

They were skilled weirdoes. They weren't playing this game to achieve endless Spec ups. They were here to enjoy the game.

Moreover...



“Anyways, if we finish this Elf tribe’s Quest, will we finally be able to meet the Red Elves?”

“Of course. That’s what the hint said.”

“I can’t wait for it. What will the Red Elves look like? I’m pretty sure they’ll have red skin, so their presence would feel different from others.”

“They’ll be pretty.”

“You only care about beauty?”

“How about you? I bet you only care about how handsome they are.”

“Hmmp. Handsomeness by itself isn’t that important. One to be handsome in a solemn manner like the Chieftain of Drah.”

“Your tastes seems really perverted.”

“How about you? Last time, I saw your gaze linger on the young Elves.”

“N...No way! Bitch! Are you trying to get me locked up!”



“Isn’t your reaction a bit weird?”

“I said no! How about you? When you went to the Frozen Lands, you took several hundred pictures of Bagle!”

“All women would understand my action. Our basic tastes run the same.”

They really liked Elves.

Whistling laughed when he heard their conversation.

Unlike him, these two had always had the pleasure of playing with each other. Whistling had fun playing this game, but at times, he did feel lonely. Their presence was a big boost to his game play.

‘It makes me think of that guy.’

At that moment, he received a message.

‘Huh?’

It wasn’t strange for him to receive a message, but Whistling became surprised when he saw who had sent it.

He immediately read the message, and he put on a serious expression.



‘How interesting. So this is how…….’

Whistling spoke towards the still bickering Yojori and Joba.

“Let me ask you guys a question..”

The two immediately stopped their war of words.

“You can ask me two questions.”

“Then you can ask me three.”

“Does anyone here have a bad relationship with the Hahoe Mask?”

“What?”

For the first time, the two noisy Users shut their mouths.



## Chapter 175 – Red Desert (2)

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4.

[Elven Artifact]

– Quest Rank : Unique

– Quest Level Range : 200

– Quest Content : The Red Elf tribe ostracizes all beings that approaches them. If you want to be accepted by them, you have to find the Artifact left behind by the Elves. Please find the Artifact.

– Quest Reward : Grave Keeper's Key.

When he looked at the newly gained Quest Content, his visage froze as it set in a heavy expression.

‘Does Warlord really hate me? Why does it keep giving me such Quests?’

The Quest Content looked easy at a glance. He just have to find and return an artifact.

However, if one was a User of Warlord, one knew how bottomless such a Quest could be. He clicked his tongue in dismay. Any Quests related to the Elves made him feel irritated from the start. If one wanted a relationship with the Elves, then one had to find the tribes. It wasn't an easy task.



Moreover, it just said find the Elven Artifact.

It didn't specify which Elven Artifact. There were no other clues.

‘I would rather kill Anugas....’

At that moment, he thought it would be easier to face a monster like Anugas. He would rather face a monster where he didn't know the method to kill it.

Of course, this was also a special characteristic of the Main Scenario Quest. It was the same starting from the first Main Scenario Quest. In the Corrupted Court Episode, it hadn't been just about killing strong monsters.

The stages provided by Warlord had a variety of contents, and one had to finish Quests all across the board. It required the Users to go through a lot of these contents to progress in the game. This was to be expected.

However, up until now, the Main Scenario Quest was powered through by brute force. This was true of Hyrkan, Stormhunters guild, Red Bulls guild and more.

It was an unnatural and a not so clever method.

These Users didn't take the time to enjoy the game.



From that perspective, he finally arrived at that point. A wall had appeared and it couldn't be jumped over by power.

This was why Hyrkan gave up on attempting this Quest early on, and he had contacted Whistling.

‘I didn't want to get him involved if possible...’

He didn't have a favorable view on his current situation.

“Tsk.”

First, it made it seem like he contacted Whistling only when Hyrkan needed him. He didn't like the optic of it. How rotten was it to look for a friend only when one needed something?

On the other hand, this was a privilege of being friends.

Even if one ignored such feelings, Whistling was now a member of the Hydra guild. It wouldn't look good to others if Whistling met up with Hyrkan.

No one would welcome the meeting of Whistling and Hyrkan at the best of times. This meeting would be viewed very unfavorably if it became known.

No one would see it as a meeting between friends.



Hyrkan's current location was the the evidence of his reticence.

"Here you are."

Hyrkan was pleased when a face that resembled a hunting dog appeared from between the overgrown trees.

"Uh. You are here?"

Hyrkan looked like the awkward friend one meets in an uncomfortable location.

On the other hand, Whistling didn't look out of sorts at all.

"Your accomplishments up until now has been tremendous."

"It's adequate."

They were in a hunting ground. It was a very remote hunting ground where one would rarely come across a User. There were no monsters or Users here. It was a very nice place to meet someone.

However, Whistling wasn't the only User, who had arrived at this place of meeting.

"Ooh-wahhhh.... It really is the Hahoe Mask."



“H...Hahoe Mask. I am a fan.”

There were two additional Users.

The two Users had expressions filled with surprise. Hyrkan looked hard at the two.

‘Yojori and Joba.’

Whistling had given him a heads up. Whistling told Hyrkan that he had to move around with two others. If Hyrkan hadn’t like the idea of meeting the two, the meeting would have been called off.

Whistling also added that these two skilled Users were trustworthy.

Hyrkan trusted Pitbull’s words, so he invited the other two Users too.

‘Yojori…….’

Hyrkan somewhat knew of the User named Yojori.

She looked kinda like a slightly pudgy cat, and Yojori hadn’t become famous until the Ruined Kingdom episode. In the Ruined Kingdom episode, her fame skyrocketed.



As the Hydra guild progressed in the Ruined Kingdom episode, Yojori worked under a Quest taskforce, and the guild had made a program centered around her. Her program was a hit, so she was quite famous.

Of course, if one analyzed her a little deeper, Yojori was different from most Users. Moreover, her uniqueness was well received by the public.

‘She was a bit of a nut case.’

If one was nice about it, she lived in the 4th dimension. If one gave a rough description, she was a weirdo. If one wanted to disparage her, she was crazy.

A User like Yojori couldn’t be understood by others. In truth, her program was popular, but she herself was only moderately popular.

Hyrkan hadn’t been interested in her, so his memories were a bit fuzzy. However, he did remember the scene where she ranked every single NPC by their appearance.

‘I don’t know this guy.’

On the other hand, Hyrkan had no recollection of Joba.



However, Hyrkan just had to sift through Joba's background information. Hyrkan could sufficiently guess at what made this User a bit unique.

‘He is a level 210 Magic Swordsman type... He's a bit twisted.’

There were a lot of Magicians, who had finished their 2nd Advancement. However, there were only a handful of Magic Swordsman type in existence, and level 210 was fairly high.

On top of it all, Magic Swordsman types focused on Raids in Warlord. They were developed with the thought of helping out the guild in mind. Magic Swordsman were the best at managing aggro of monsters.

However, Joba was part of the Quest Exploration team instead of a Raid team. At the very least, he couldn't be seen as a normal User.

These factors weren't enough to soften Hyrkan's expression.

Hyrkan wasn't looking at the two with a friendly expression, and even though he was wearing a Hahoe Mask, his emotion was transmitted to the two.

Yojori and Joba flinched in surprise.

‘Why is he being liking this? Is there some kind of a problem?’



‘Did I wrong the Hahoe Mask in the past? Did he somehow found out about my weird comments beneath his youtube videos? I’m pretty sure I didn’t cuss at him.’

Every User in Warlord knew about the Hahoe Mask, but Yojori and Joba were self-proclaimed Hahoe Mask fans. They were very well informed about his tendencies, so they knew he was very temperamental. He was ruthless against anyone, who got on his nerves. Moreover, he had no compunction about using cheap and dirty methods from time to time. They knew he was the real deal. He was a veteran expert.

Of course, the two would be nervous standing in front of him.

After staring at the two, Hyrkan turned his gaze towards Whistling.

“Are they original members of the Hydra guild?”

“We can’t say we are one of the original members, but we’ve been in the Hydra guild long enough that we could be seen as original members.”

“Will you guys be ok?”

“What do you mean?”



“I don’t mind receiving help from the Hydra guild, but wouldn’t it be a problem for you guys? It isn’t as if you guys received permission from the guild to come here.”

Hyrkan only needed Whistling’s help. However, there was a troublesome barrier between the two called the Hydra guild.

From Hyrkan’s perspective, he didn’t want the Hydra guild to get hold of information regarding the Main Scenario Quest. Of course, we wouldn’t mind a give and take relationship.

However, he needed something worthwhile to break through his reluctance.

On the contrary, Whistling was in a tough situation. If he helped the Hahoe Masked without informing the Hydra guild, Whistling and the two other Users here would be taking on a huge risk.

However, Whistling gave a clear answer regarding this perceived problem.

“I don’t need the guild’s permission. If they have a problem with me, I can just leave. Anyways, I’ve never received help from the Hydra guild. It is the same for these two. We just need to give the Hydra guild information about the Quests we are on, and nothing else.”

Whistling was very clear with his answer. It was easily given, because Whistling viewed Warlord as only a game, and nothing



more.

“This is why the consent of these two is more important than getting permission from the guild. I share a common destiny with these two. Maybe it is more apt to say that we all share the same Quests. Moreover, I’ve received a lot of help from them.”

“No. We received much more help from you than we gave.”

“If it wasn’t for Whistling oppa, we wouldn’t have been able to get this far in the Elven Quests!”

They spoke at the same time in an embarrassed fashion, but the two glared at each other when their words overlapped.

While the two were glaring at each other, Whistling finished speaking.

“This is why if those two didn’t agree to it, I couldn’t have helped you on your Quest.”

Help.

Hyrkan was barely able to suppress his bitter laugh at the choice of word.

‘He is still the romantic.’



He'll help.

It was a phrase that was easy on the ears, but Hyrkan had heard those word only a few times in Warlord. It had always been a give and take. It had always been a deal.

In Hyrkan's vocabulary, help meant that he would have to pay back this gesture down the line. He had expected Whistling to demand an arrangement with him.

"The final reason is the fact that your Quest and our Quest may be intertwined in some way. This is also why I cannot make this decision by myself. My Quest is our Quest."

At that point, Hyrkan was about to indulge himself in his sentimental feelings. He pulled himself back from that hole of emotion.

He was thankful.

He was thankful for the offer of help, and he appreciated the offer of leaving the Hydra guild to help him.

Unfortunately, Hyrkan couldn't view Warlord as just a game like Whistling.

"All right. Let's draw a clear line here. I need to be able to get into the town of the Red Elves. Let us cooperate until that point."



Hyrkan decided to make this into a deal.

For a brief moment, a bitter smile crossed Whistling mouth before it was erased.

“I guess I’ll give the formal introduction. Yojori and Joba. I think it’ll be enough to describe them as a Crusader and a Magic Swordsman. Joba has the highest level at 210. I’m at level 207, and Yojori is level 206. This is the Hahoe Mask. He is famous, so do I need to speak any further?”

At those words, the two Users opened their mouths as if they had been waiting for it.

“Of course not.”

“It is an honor to be meeting you. I know this might be out of bounds on a first meeting, but do you think I could get a selfie with you?”

“Ah! Please I would like one too. Of course, I decline being in the same picture as him.”

“I also don’t want to be in the same frame as her.”

“You should ignore him.”



“No, he should ignore you. Damn Crusader! Hahoe Mask-nim is an exalted Lich! You are the polar opposite of him, you perverted bitch!”

“Did I say to the contrary? Isn’t he a bit too noisy?”

Mumble mumble.

Hyrkan took his eyes off the two to look at Whistling. Whistling’s eyebrows and shoulders shrugged.

There was no way his future would be quiet.

5.

“The storyline for the Red Elves was present before anyone came to the Black Continent.”

When Hyrkan and Whistling’s Family decided to ally with each other, they conducted a briefing where they exchanged information regarding the Quests.

“I first came across it on a level 160 Quest called the Heir of the Barley Kingdom. It happened a long time ago in the Barley Kingdom.... If we put it in terms of the current outlook on the world, it is another ruined kingdom. Anyways, this was an Elven Kingdom, and all the Elves on this continent were once citizens of this Kingdom.”



“I’ll expand on my explanation a little bit. When I finished the Heir of the Barley Kingdom episode, I immediately gained maximum Intimacy Level with the Yoomoo tribe. As a benefit, I was able entered the protected Record Trees. The Record Trees are amazing. Once something was recorded within the tree, it eventually creates a seed. This seed could be planted elsewhere, and whatever that was recorded before would come out as leaves in the new tree. It was like a living library. When I saw it, I was moved.”

“The Black Dwarves will create the spears and shield that will be able to harm them. The Red Fae will hide these weapons. In the distant future, the humans equipped with these spears and shields will be able to pierce through the Curse. Their hearts will be pierced by the spear!”

“Huh? You memorized it?”

“I’m smarter than you.”

“You probably read it off of a picture you took before. You are being pretentious.”

In a flash, the briefing strayed from the main topic, so it was up to Whistling to tie the end.

“In summary, the Red Elf tribe had been tasked to store these weapons. They held this role before the Ruined Kingdom was ruined. This is where your Quest comes in. You received the Elven



Artifact Quest, and it is talking about the Artifacts left behind by the Barley Kingdom.”

Hyrkan felt faint as he heard the briefing.

‘If I did this by myself, I wouldn’t have known about this hint.’

It was an Artifact of the Barley Kingdom?

Hyrkan didn’t know about this storyline.

“This is troublesome. That means I have to find the Quest that deals with the Barley Kingdom’s Artifacts, then progress through it.....”

He was fortunate to have been able to find a hint like this. If he hadn’t, it would have been like pressing the reset button during a game.

“Fortunately, we are progressing in the Quest to find the Barley Kingdom’s Artifacts. Moreover, we found a clue.”

“What?”

Hyrkan became startled at Whistling’s words.

“Really?”



He never expected for his dilemma to be resolved like this.

“We have to go north.”

After speaking, Whistling turned to look at Yojori.

She took out an Item, and this Item was a Conch made out of gem.

The light in Hyrkan’s eyes changed.

‘The Gem Conch has already made its appearance?’

Conches were crucial Items needed for one to be guided through the Ruined Kingdom Episode.

Moreover, the worth of a Conch differed depending on what it was made out of. The most common one was the Wooden Conch. If one was progressing through Quests, it was common to see a User carrying around two to three Wooden Conches. In the extreme end, some Users carried around a dozen Wooden Conches. Then there were the Golden Conches, which were a tier above. The last type was the Gem Conches. There was no tier above the Gem conches.

‘This is driving me nuts.’



Hyrkan once again felt a weird sense of dissonance. He knew the game was progressing at a rapid pace, but the speed differed too much from his knowledge. It wasn't just the speed that had changed. The distance one had to travel had shortened too.

Of course, Hyrkan didn't question this truth for long.

‘The all mighty AI will do its job.’

The fact that he had those questions didn't mean he'll find the answers to it. Hyrkan was far from being a curious man.

The most important thing for him was to eat the preys that were right in front of him.

“The problem is the fact that we can't go north. First, it isn't Hydra guild's territory. Moreover, everyone has pretty much given up exploring north past the Highwood Forest.”

Hyrkan nodded his head at Whistling's words.

“I don't know about the other things, but I can guarantee a comfortable passage through the Red Desert. You'll ride a bus that normally you won't be able to ride even with money.”

He finally established the give and take relationship at that moment.



6.

Heh-bibin was watching a video.

Puh-uhng, puh-uhng!

Inside the video, the rare Boss Monster Black Tree was being lit up by explosions like a Christmas Tree.

This was the Hahoe Mask's debut pay-per-view video called Christmas Tree's Nightmare. It sold over 2 million videos, and it was considered to be one of the classic masterpieces by the fans of Warlord. An year's time was forever in terms of online time.

Heh-bibin also remembered several things about this footage...

It was hard to call it a good memory, yet several harsh events were etched into his memory.

'I'm sure of it. Pitbull is the one that shows up briefly within the footage.'

While this footage was being filmed, the Big Smiles guild had been gearing up for a war with the Fighters guild. They tried to hunt down Pitbull to provoke a war, and Apollo had been in charge of that mission. Moreover, Heh-bibin was one of the figures that had sponsored the mission.



‘After this video, we tried to hunt down Pitbull... We failed.

During the hunt, a problem occurred. There was a disrupter called the Hahoe Mask. No one expected him to show up.

‘If I think back on it, it is hard to see it as an random act of violence.’

At the time, he had thought the Hahoe Mask was trying to kick Big Smiles, while they were down. The Hahoe Mask, Apollo and Big Smiles didn’t have a good relationship. If one took their relationship in context, it wouldn’t be strange to see it as a random act of violence perpetrated towards the other party.

However, now he saw that the Hahoe Mask had no reason to save Pitbull’s life. Of course, this was assuming there was no connection between Pitbull and the Hahoe Mask.

When his thoughts arrived at that point, Heh-bibin earnestly did his research. He wanted to see if Pitbull and the Hahoe Mask had travelled together before. Unexpectedly, he found a lot of information in regards to their closeness.

‘The Hahoe Mask has no ties with the Hydra guild. These two guys’ relationship started during the Fighters guild’s days, where Whistling Pitbull was a token guild member. Moreover, the Hahoe Mask had no relationship to the Fighters guild either. If they did, they would have already risen to being one of the 30 great guilds.’



Heh-bibin went through various scenarios to come up with this conclusion.

They were personal acquaintances. The personal relationship was between the Hahoe Mask and the Pitbull.

‘If I poke Pitbull, the Hahoe Mask will come out.’

Of course, if the Big Smiles guild attacked Pitbull, he’ll monitor to see how the Hahoe Mask responded.

‘……that sounds too one-dimensional.’

However, Heh-bibin wasn’t aiming for that reaction.

‘If I poke Pitbull, the first to respond would be the Hydra guild.’

The Hydra guild would mobilize before the Hahoe Mask, because Pitbull was now a member of the Hydra guild.

‘This is great. ’

This was what he was aiming for.

Heh-bibin was a sub-guild master of the Big Smiles guild. It was a pretty high position. It was a higher position than the rank of officer in the previous iteration of the Big Smiles guild. However,



the actual power he had was much lower than before. He didn't even have the right to speak in regards to the state of affairs of the Big Smiles guild.

In truth, the Big Smiles guild was held by the hands of Sinclair and Brooks.

The sub-guild master Apollo was their sycophant.

The Big Smiles guild was geared towards appeasing Sinclair. Sinclair held more power than the Guild Master Brooks.

It was so bad that Apollo contacted Sinclair first rather than the Guild Master Brooks.

Moreover, Heh-bibin hadn't been given the position of sub-guild master, because they favored him. In the reorganization of the Big Smiles guild, Brooks and Heh-bibin had been against each other. When Heh-bibin lost the power struggle, he was given a high position, so the guild wouldn't implode. If Brooks had just excised him out of the guild, Heh-bibin would have nothing to lose. He would have come at them as if it was a matter of life or death.

Of course, now the three members had established their power base, and they were slowly eating away at Heh-bibin's power.

Now the opinions of the Five Stars were more important than the Big Smiles guild. Decisions had to be agreed by the five guilds, and Heh-bibin was just an insignificant part of one of the guilds. He



could do nothing.

‘I never expected such a good excuse to show up. This is the best.’

This was why he started making preparations.

Heh-bibin was going to reverse his fortune.

If he wanted to turn the tide, he needed to shake up the game board.

The current game board didn’t allow him to anything.

He had to create an imbalance, and he’ll able to flip the fractured parts.

‘I just have to use Apollo. We just have to kill Pitbull. I don’t care if it is the Hydra guild or the Hahoe Mask. They’ll fight us.’

The Hydra guild and the Hahoe Mask was sufficient enough of an adversary. Of course, in the process, the Big Smiles guild would suffer big damages. However, that didn’t matter to Heh-bibin. In the end, the responsibility will fall on the people above him, who held all the power.

The only thing he was certain was the fact that his situation couldn’t get any worse from doing this. Heh-bibin was already at rock bottom.



‘I’ll make you all pay for ignoring me.’

After finishing this thought, Heh-bibin contacted Apollo.



## Chapter 176 – Red Desert (3)

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7.

The Wood Devil's body was made out of rocks, trees and dirt. It was starting to disintegrate. At first, the heaviest stones fell to the floor, and from where the stones were dislodged, soil started to flow out like blood.

On the surface of the Wood Devil's body, armored Skeleton Warriors were stuck to it.

They held onto the thick wooden branches protruding from the Wood Devil's body with their left hand, and they tirelessly stabbed with the blade in their right hand. The Skeleton Warriors' work made the Wood Devil's body looked ragged, and it was being turned into a mess.

The one to launch the strongest offensive attacks was the Death Knight, who faced the Wood Devil head on.

Koong, koong, koong!

Each headbutt of the Skeleton Steed made the Wood Devil lose its balance, and the Death Knight used this opportunity to stab its sharp blade into the body of the Wood Devil.

The Death Knight's attack was very precise, and it attacked the whole body.



The Death Knight used decisive swings to attack the neck, chest and waist of the Wood Devil. The attacks varied, but the damage it caused was consistent. It kept stabbing and slashing at the same locations. The Death Knight looked like a skilled lumberjack using an axe to take down a large tree.

Koong!

In the end, the large body of the Wood Devil fell to the ground from the continuous assault. The fallen Wooden Devil didn't even twitch. Its devil-like visage was gone. The Wood Devil's corpse looked as if it had been impacted by a typhoon. The stones, woods and soil was spread around everywhere as if it had faced the teeth of the wind.

Two Users were staring at the sight with a blank expression. It looked as if their souls had been sucked out. They yelled out at the same time.

“My level just increased!”

“My level went up.”

The battlefield had been filled with the sound of swords, roars, and the unique bone clacking of the Skeletons. Now the battlefield started to be filled with the voices of people.

“This is incredible.”



“I heard the Wood Devil gave out a lot of EXP, but I never expected it to be this much.... It is only a mid-sized monster, but it has the EXP of a large monster.”

“It just took 2 days to increase one level. If we maintain this speed, maybe we will be able to catch up to the First One?”

“I thought the Wood Devils aren’t supposed to be this easy to take down?”

“Don’t you have eyes? Numerous Skeletons continuously attacked it, yet it lasted for over 10 minutes. It was this short, because we are talking about the Hahoe Mask-nim. I bet over a dozen ordinary Users would have to attack to defeat it!”

“It is what it is. So why are you getting angry at me?”

“I didn’t get angry at you?”

“What the hell was that bullshit from before? Was it some kind of a hysterical fit?”

“Hey!”

“What?”

The noise around him was quite loud. It was funny, but when he



heard the bickering, he understood how a certain woman felt.

‘Che-sulyun always has Hatch and Hahui in front of her. I think I can understand a little bit as to what she has to go through.’

Yojori and Joba was similar to the Hahui and Hatch, who represented the Stormhunters guild.

They continuously fought with words, but when the battle started, they showed teamwork that was better than what most Users could pull off. It wasn’t just the fact that they were individually talented. The two of them had experienced fighting alongside each other for a long time.

‘This game has a lot of interesting people.’

The Crusader was a Striker type occupation under the Priest Class. The Magic Swordsman type was under the Magician Class. Their ability to cooperate with each other was the secret reason why they were able to reach level 200 with such difficult occupations.

Hyrkan also had someone, who had filled such a role.

‘There are a lot of shitty humans too’

He had a comrade whom he had thought he could entrust his back to.



“You did well.”

Whistling stared at the two Users. After Hyrkan started the battle, Whistling hadn't had the opportunity to unsheath his sword for two days. It was a very novel experience, and he gave a word of encouragement to Hyrkan. Whistling had a peculiar expression his face.

He was apologetic and surprised. Several complex emotions arose within him anew.

In the past, he had searched for the Elven Forest, and Hyrkan had leveled up quickly thanks to Whistling's help. Now Hyrkan was helping Whistling in the same way. He just watched as his level went up, and it was great... However, such a short sentence was inadequate to describe what he was feeling.

Hyrkan shrugged his shoulder.

“The Skeletons are doing the heavy lifting, not me.”

Accompanying those words, Hyrkan put a candy in his mouth. It was as Hyrkan had said. The fighting was all done by his Skeletons. He didn't even need to summon his Golems for the Wood Devils. He had a Death Knight and two Skeleton Knights out. Then there were the 20 Skeleton Warriors and three Skeleton Magicians. Hyrkan maintained this exact number.



It was a figure he came up with through experimentation as he had hunted inside the Highwood Forest for 10 days.

Of course, nothing was free. Hyrkan repeatedly ate expensive magic recovery Items as he continued his battles.

Hyrkan quickly crunched and grinded the Item into small pieces as he tried to recover his magical energy as soon as possible. Hyrkan looked grim as he did so, and this was when he looked the most combative.

“You really eat an endless supply of those Items.”

“My brand of fighting always puts me at a loss in terms of profit. If I don’t bring in so much profit through my videos, this would be too unprofitable to continue. Of course, I’m leveling up, so after calculating all factors, I can say I come out ahead. That damn levels.”

At Hyrkan’s words, Whistling’s mouth cracked open a little bit. It seemed he was about to say something, but in the end, he shut his mouth. He even swallowed most of what he had been about to say.

“...you are enduring hardships.”

“I’m not enduring any hardship. As I said before, my Skeletons are doing all the heavy lifting.”

Hyrkan smiled as he looked at his Skeletons.



Whistling lightly nodded his head when he saw this.

“Well, let’s dismantle the Wood Devils.”

At Hyrkan’s words, the argument between Yojori and Joba ended like magic. At the same time, the two of them shouted towards Hyrkan.

“I’ll do it!”

“I want to do it!”

They were freakishly in sync in whatever they did. However, this was also the cause of their arguments.

Anyways, they were working hard to repay the generosity shown by the him.

Hyrkan shrugged his shoulders, and Whistling opened his mouth.

“I’ll do it.”

Hyrkan turned around to look at Whistling, and Whistling shrugged his shoulder.



“I’m riding such a great bus for free. I should at least pick up the trash rolling around in the bus.”

8.

“The Hahoe Mask is back again?”

Currently, all the Users using the Highwood Forest as their main hunting ground were from the same guild.

Big Smiles guild.

When the members of the Big Smiles guild heard that the Hahoe Mask had appeared once again, they tsked and hemmed.

“That son of a bitch is treating this place as if it is his front yard.”

“It would have been better if it was his front yard. This is our house. He is in our front yard, and the Hahoe Mask is a thief.”

“We are the retarded ones. We spotted a thief, yet we are making it easier for the thief.”

Their average level was 228. It wasn’t low at all. Even if they searched the entirety of Warlord, not many people have yet to achieve this level. Of course, these were the core members of Big Smiles. They were the big guns of the guild.



The guild had wholeheartedly supported them, so they could level up. They had personal Level Up support teams, and they fought against anything that would impede them from leveling up even in real life. These Users ran on treadmills, and they worked out to train their bodies.

They weren't playing this game for fun. This was their occupation.

From their perspective, they had been running full tilt on track when a monster like King Kong or a dinosaur had appeared. Of course, they wouldn't look kindly towards such an impediment.

“Maybe sub-guildmaster Heh-bibin is right. This is ridiculous. Why do they think we won't be able to kill the Hahoe Mask if we go out in force? Why do we have to leave that bastard alone?”

Antipathy always brought out bitter words.

“Still, why should we unnecessarily bother the Hahoe Mask? This is something decided by the Five Stars. They decided to leave the Hahoe Mask alone.”

“It wasn't the Five Star. It was a decision made by the V&V guild. In the end, the Five Stars are servants of the V&V guild.”

“Your words are a bit…….”

Moreover, bitter words always took hold easily.



“You aren’t wrong. In truth, we have to settle a quarrel with the Hahoe Mask. I can’t even go around telling people I’m with the Big Smiles guild, because of that bastard. If I tell people I’m from the Big Smiles guild, the first thing they do is to ridicule me.”

“Guild master Brooks is basically a puppet of Sinclair, and Sinclair sides with the V&V guild. In the first place, didn’t V&V hire him as a mercenary? Sub-guild master Heh-bibin is right. If things remain the same, we’ll just be used.”

“Hey, what are you talking about? If Sinclair-nim didn’t join us, we would be in a worse situation right now.”

“This is this and that is that”

“Let’s be honest. Wouldn’t it be worth it to kill the Hahoe Mask? If we do manage to kill him, the sale of the footage would be astronomical. Moreover, no one would disparage us for trying to kill the Hahoe Mask with a lot of Users. It isn’t as if we did anything wrong this time around. Hahoe Mask wronged us first.”

“We are clearly on the moral high ground here.”

As the conversation continued, someone spoke up.

“In a situation like this, isn’t the Killer supposed to fight the Hahoe Mask? I know we’ve had success recently thanks to the Killer, but why do we have to admit defeat before the fight?”



“You guys are taking this way too seriously.”

“These are harsh words, but we aren’t wrong.”

“Of course, you guys are in the wrong! What if Killer loses? It’ll be the end of us!”

“Does losing to the Hahoe Mask actually hurt us? If so, Sohank would have never recovered from his prior loss.”

“I would be more understanding if we had lost a PVP match to the Hahoe Mask. However, this isn’t the case. There is a difference between losing and cowardice.”

“No. Our situation right now.....”

The debate wasn’t showing any signs of dying down.

Some Users stopped participating in the discussion, and they just observed what was said.

– We are luring a Wood Devil. Please get ready for battle.

When the Users received a message from the Level Up support team, they put a pause to their conversation for now.



9.

They went past the Highwood Forest, and they arrived at the Red Desert.

Hyrkan no longer hunted any monsters.

He ran.

He ran full tilt.

The others also ran.

Shweeek! Shweeek!

A Sand Snake was closing the distance at incredible speed as the four Users ran.

At that moment, Hyrkan threw two Skeleton Fragments.

They were running too fast, so the Skeleton Warriors formed after the Sand Snake had slithered past the Skeleton Fragments. However, the Skeleton Warriors immediately caught up to the Sand Snake, and they attacked the hard body of the monster.

Kyahhh!



The Sand Snake stopped its pursuit. It took one of the Skeleton Warrior in its mouth, and it burrowed into the ground.

The remaining Skeleton Warrior looked around as its comrade and enemy disappeared.

‘This is ridiculous..’

Hyrkan had used the Skeleton Warriors as bait. Hyrkan and the three others in his party was able to put a significant amount of distance from the Sand Snake using this method.

However, they didn’t stop running.

They kept running as if nothing had happened, and they talked as they ran.

“It seems even Hahoe Mask-nim has a hard time driving the bus in the Red Desert.”

“Hey. You should keep that kind of talk to yourself. Why do you have to say that out loud?”

“Ah. I’m sorry. My mouth gets away from me sometimes....”

Hyrkan let out a bitter laugh at their words.



The current situation was unfolding as he had expected. When they entered the Red Desert, he gave up on hunting the monsters. He focused on heading towards the directions pointed out by the Gem Conch.

It wasn't impossible for Hyrkan to take down all the Sand Snakes. However, problems would arise if one of his three party members were taken below the sand. At that point, Hyrkan couldn't save them. Also, it was true that Sand Snake was much harder to catch than the Wood Devils.

“Do you know this trivia? Originally, the Sand Snake monster wasn't a monster.”

Joba didn't want Hyrkan's mood to sour from his previous remark. Joba changed the topic.

“Is there a story behind it?”

Hyrkan showed a little bit of interest. Even if they were running full tilt, no one was out of breath. In such a boring marathon, talking was a great way to pass the time.

Moreover, Yojori and Joba told entertaining stories, and there were a lot of substance behind their stories. In regards to certain topics, they knew more than Hyrkan.

“The Sand Snake was a mode of transportation used by Elves and Dwarves, who lived in the Red Desert. They used the Sand Snakes



to travel through the underground tunnels.”

“What a weird transportation method.”

“Before the Barley Kingdom became eradicated by the Dragon’s Curse, a passage was handed down. The exact words were...”

“To avoid the Dragon’s Curse, the ground snake was used to make an underground world. The power will allow one to fight it. One’s will to fight and the path to the future will be placed there.”

“Ah. That’s it. It was that phrase.”

“You should memorize the information sometimes.”

“The interesting part was the specific terms used in the passage. It said the power will allow one to fight it. It means there is a high chance that there will be only a single opponent one would have to face later.”

“Just one?”

Hyrkan titled his head in puzzlement.

Joba immediately gave an explanation.

“Currently, four Dragons had appeared in regards to the Main



Scenario Quest. The north held the Frost Dragon's Curse. The east held the Fire Dragon's Curse at the Urugal mountain range. The south has the Light Dragon's Curse. The blinding light had kept an island hidden from plain sight. The last one was located in the west at the Hell's Cave. It holds the Darkness Dragon's Curse."

"Then there was the story of an almighty being giving a divine punishments using thunder! The writings regarding this subject was found. If one puts all this information together, there are five of them. If one looks at the account left behind in the Record Tree, it often refers to the Dragons in plural terms."

Hyrkan couldn't help, but laugh after hearing their story.

'They really are more informed about the game compared to me.'

They were talking about the five powers related to the Mythos Rank Ancient Power. Of course, Hyrkan knew about it.

However, Hyrkan knew it, because he had come back to the past.

How much effort did these people have to expend to acquire such knowledge?

There was no way their effort would have been poor.

"You are very well informed. Incredible."



Hyrkan knew the difficulties, so his compliments were genuine. He was really impressed.

The fact that they were acknowledged by the Hahoe Mask put smiles on Yojori and Joba's face.

In truth, they were part of the fringe element.

Even if they put in a lot of effort into their type of work, not many people acknowledged their excellence.

The Hahoe Mask was the most mainstream User in Warlord. The fact that they received a simple compliment from him was a treat

“This is a secret. Aside from the Hydra guild, we sometimes exchange ideas and opinion with other like minded friends.”

“Quest Man has especially been a big help to us.”

They had the opportunity to talk about a subject they had kept hidden from others. This was why they were excited.

“Quest Man?”

“He is called Zeet. He is pretty low leveled, but he is a User, who really digs into Quests in Warlord.”



Hyrkan tilted his head.

‘Zeet? Isn’t he... No way.’

A name he knew had come up, but Hyrkan dismissed the idea.

At the very least, the Zeet he knew would not associate himself with these noisy pair. He couldn’t imagine them finding enough common ground to keep in contact with each other.

“The Quest Man is really incredible. Amongst the regular Users, he probably knows the most about the setting, and the outlook of Warlord. Ah. Please don’t tell the Hydra guild about this... This is our secret....”

Even though they were affiliated with a large guild, these two had pursued their own goals. They pursued the romanticism inside the game.

Both the current Hyrkan and the Hyrkan before he came to the past would never have thought about doing such activities.

This was why Hyrkan unconsciously spoke the truth..

“You guys make the game fun.”

“What?”



The two of them looked stupefied at the words spoken by Hyrkan.

“Isn’t that why we play the game? If the game isn’t fun, why would we play this game?”

“Whatever. Aren’t you here to drool at the Elves?”

“What about you?”

“At the very least, I don’t drool just from seeing the Elves.”

“Aigo. Of course. You drool every time you see a handsome NPC.”

They started bickering again, and Hyrkan stayed out of it.

In truth, they weren’t really fighting with words. Hyrkan was well aware of this fact now. They just liked bouncing ideas and words off of each other. This was a routine they performed. It was like the daily routines performed by a couple.

However, Whistling was the one to stop their conversation.

“East! The direction changed to the east!”

Whistling had placed the Gem Conch to his ear, and the instruction had changed to point them towards the east.



Once again, they were running full tilt towards their destination. Hyrkan returned to being himself as he shut away everything that bothered him.



# Chapter 177 – Red Desert (4)

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10

There was a big hole. The big hole had a diameter of 20 meters. It was inadequate to simply call it a hole. It was big enough to call it a chasm.

The four Users were speechless as they looked at the entrance.

“Uh.....”

Hyrkan, who had the experience of going through all sorts of hardships, was first to open his mouth after he came to his senses.

“So shall we head in?”

“Both the Quest Content and the Gem Conch is telling us to go in.”

Whistling answered Hyrkan. At that moment, Yojori and Joba was still unable to come to their senses. They vacantly looked at the hole. Yojori, who always chirped aloud, had her mouth shut as she stared at the intimidating hole.

Of course, the size wasn't the only reason why they were awed and intimidated.



“Crazy. You saw what happened earlier!”

Hyrkan’s party hadn’t become intimidated by the hole. It had to do with the being that had made the hole.

“Mmmm.”

At Hyrkan’s words, the four of them thought about what happened earlier.... It was around three minutes ago.

While everyone was clicking their tongue in amazement, Hyrkan spoke out loud to organize his memories..

“The snake from earlier.... It sounds like a misnomer to call it a snake. Anyways, you guys all saw the 10 stories long monster?”

They had arrived at their destination by following the Gem Conch, and a stone monument was waiting for Hyrkan’s party. Of course, the stone monument was weathered, so there was nothing on it. The four of them stood on top of the stone monument with a vacant expression on their faces. Whistling put the Gem Conch to his ear, and it said to head downwards.

Everyone let out some choice words at this direction.

Did they have to dig up the ground?

However, the Red Desert couldn’t be dug out.



They couldn't do it....

Their complaints were along that line.

Koo koo koo!

At that moment, a large sound was heard, and an earthquake could be felt. The ground started to crack, so everyone decided to retreat for now. The ground cracked as it sunk. An enormous snake erupted out of the ground when everyone was clear of the stone monument.

Hyrkan, who had pretty much experienced everything within this game, dumbly stared at the majestic mammoth of a snake.

The snake quickly disappeared back into the ground as soon as it appeared.

Since then, the situation remained the same.

“I'm sure of it. The Gem Conch wants us to go in there.”

Everyone wanted Whistling to listen to the Gem Conch again. For reference, this was the seventh time they had asked him to do this. Still, Whistling hadn't kept count, but he continued to put the Gem Conch to his ear. Whistling was also dazed at what had just happened.



“Uh whew.”

Hyrkan let out a long sigh.

‘This is nuts.’

It wasn't as if the situation was totally unbelievable. This was a game. The large snake had appeared, and it had made a hole. The hole led to some other location. This wasn't out of the realm of possibility of what one would face in a game. It was actually a very cool setting.

‘If that snake is the boss monster.... Will I be able to kill it?’

The problem arose if they would have to kill the large snake from earlier. This particular game was sadistic enough to make them confront and kill the snake. At that point, this would turn from being a cool setting to being a horrible setting.

Even Hyrkan couldn't imagine himself fighting this snake.

This was why everyone had a vacant expression on their faces.

“I'll go in first.”

Whistling was able to somewhat pull himself together, so he volunteered to be the sacrificial lamb. Hyrkan turned to look at



Whistling.

“This hole isn’t an Instance Dungeon. One person can go scout and come back. If there is a problem, one could run back here.”

“Ah. Then I’ll go in first.”

“No way. I should go in. A Crusader has a higher chance of surviving.”

Yojori and Joba was finally able to open their mouths, and they each offered to be the sacrificial lamb. They spoke about it as if it was their duty.

On the other hand, the Hahoe Mask acted different from them. He became surprised at their words, and at the same time, he fell into a dilemma.

He was afraid.

He calculated the cost associated with his Game Over. He used simplified figures for his calculations. When he arrived at a figure, he clamped his mouth shut.

He didn’t like the number he had arrived at, and at the same time, he didn’t like the fact that he was weighing only his own interests.



‘When did I.....’

The Hero Slaughterer didn’t use to make such calculations. The only thing the Hero Slaughterer cared about was whether he was going to kill an opponent or not. His calculations revolved around the methods needed to kill the ones that deserved to be killed. That was it.

“Hoo-oooh.”

Hyrkan let out a long sigh.

“If we are set on this plan, I’ll go in.”

The three of them reacted to his words. Before they could speak, Hyrkan gave an explanation.

“Even if a lesser monster comes out, the only one that could defeat it would be me.”

Hyrkan was right. If it wasn’t for him, they wouldn’t have been able to reach this location. The Red Desert was a burdensome stage even for Hyrkan. If a goblin appeared here, the three of them would be hard pressed to kill it. This game was like that.

At his words, the three Users nodded their heads.

“Then we can all go in together.”



“Yeah. We can do that.”

Instead of giving an answer, Whistling turned to look at Hyrkan. Hyrkan was still thinking over the decision.

‘It isn’t an Instant Dungeon... If things go sideways, we can run away. Yes, that’s what we’ll do. I’ll just use the Golems to buy time. If we keep a sharp mind, we’ll be able to survive even if we all go into the tiger’s cave.’

Whistling looked at Hyrkan as his eyes became bleary.

11.

[You’ve entered the Den of the Rebels.]

[You’ve acquired the title ‘Visitor of the Den of Rebels’.]

[You’ve acquired the title ‘Inheritor of the Ruined Kingdom’s Will.’]

[You’ve acquired the title ‘One who saw the Mirage Snake’.]

The Mirage Snake had made this large hole, and the four Users slid down the tunnel like a water slide. They were instantly greeted with three presents. Three out of the four Users immediately marvelled at what they had received.



“Rebels.... It sounds nice.”

“If this is the Den of the Rebel, then the Quest Man was correct. This scenario is set up as he had predicted.”

“I don’t care about that. I just want Elves to come out and greet me.”

“Crazy son of a bitch.”

“Even I think my words were a little bit too much. Anyways, the Mirage Snake... Wasn’t it awesome?”

“I agree. A large snake made this tunnel. It was very cool.”

On the other hand, the remaining User was unlatching his wristwatch instead of looking over his presents.

[Item Slot Change Mode is unavailable now.]

He gripped the wrist watch, which he had slipped off. A darkness flowed out from the wristwatch to make a door.

[Death Knight was Summoned.]

A Death Knight appeared within the dark tunnel.



[Special Skill ‘Commander’ was activated.]

Nine Skeleton Warriors, two Skeleton Magicians and a Skeleton Knight appeared alongside the Death Knight.

[Bone Armor was summoned.]

[Madness Helm was summoned.]

As if the summoning wasn’t enough, all kinds of Skills armed the Skeleton unit again. The Bone Armor surrounded the Skeletons, and a horn grew on their heads. Moreover, all kinds of Curses was added on to their weapons.

[Life Vessel was activated.]

At the end, Hyrkan activated the Life Vessel Skill.

He optimized himself for survival, and when he finished all his preparations, he was prepared to slip into his fighting mode at any moment.

“Hoo-ooh.”

His sigh came out as if to harden his resolve.

“All right. Let’s move.”



12.

The Death Knight rode the Skeleton Steed as it took the lead. The Skeleton Knight, Warriors. and Magicians followed behind it. Hyrkan's group was in the rear. It was an exaggeration to say that they were in the rear. Hyrkan's party was as far as they could be with the Death Knight and its cohort.

The distance between the two groups was quite large.

However, Hyrkan wasn't satisfied even after putting that much distance with the advance group. He kept vigilant of his surrounding.

He was actually too vigilant.

"We'll lead from the front."

It was so bad that Yojori and Joba stepped forward to intervene.

"It is too dangerous."

"At worst, we'll die. We can live with that."

From their perspective, Hyrkan was being overly cautious.



They didn't enjoy a Game Over, but from their perspective, they were willing to risk a Game Over if needed. It was an option they were willing to choose.

On the other hand, Hyrkan valued survival over everything else, and he acted accordingly.

However, Hyrkan's vigilance was eating away at their time. Up until now, Hyrkan had moved at break speed when he committed to fighting. However, Hyrkan was now moving at the slowest speed setting that could be travelled by the Skeleton army.

This was why they moved only 3 kilometers, yet it took them an hour.

Moreover, the tunnel made one feel ashamed for being so vigilant. It was called the Den of the Rebels, but until they found the ruined underground city, they hadn't run across anything dangerous. Not a single battle was fought..

“Wow!”

“This is amazing.”

“What is it? Where is the light coming from?”

“There. I think something is over there. The ceiling is really high. Isn't this as big as a domed baseball stadium?”



“Unexpectedly, this place is pretty clean. I have a hard time calling it a ruin. I don’t think this place suffered any attacks. It was just abandoned.”

When the underground city was found, Yojori and Joba couldn’t hold themselves back. They started running around to satisfy their curiosity.

On the other hand, Hyrkan was still tense.

‘Where is it?’

They had basically followed a path left behind by the snake. He got ready to fight a battle with the snake. It might occur at any moment.

‘Where did it go?’

Whistling intruded into the feeling of tenseness felt by Hyrkan.

“Maybe, this is because I haven’t seen you in awhile. However, you are really make this game boring.”

“What?”

Hyrkan replied reflexively. Hyrkan’s question held a sharp edge to it. However, Whistling wasn’t someone, who would back down,



because he heard some sharp words.

“When we met last time, you grumbled a lot, but you seemed to be enjoying yourself playing this game.”

“What are you trying to say?”

Instead of giving an immediate answer, Whistling thought over his answer. He organized his thoughts and feelings he had, since he met up with Hyrkan for this Quest. After he thought through everything, he gave his answer.

“Each person has their own reason for playing this game, and I don’t care what that reason is. However, one’s action should match one’s motivation to play this game.”

This was a bit of an exaggeration, but Whistling had seen the Hahoe Mask as a gamer sent by the gods. He was a warrior sent by the gods to see if he could reach the end of Warlord.

He was akin to a warrior of a god!

In reality, Hyrkan created results that far exceeded his talents. He didn’t give up when confronted with difficulties. If there was a dead end, he used all methods available to him to pave a path forward. Even if it was a battle considered to be impossible, he put his life on the line to drag himself to victory.

Hahoe Mask was that kind of a User. The battle footages that was



popular on youtube was the evidence. He could just order his powerful Skeleton Underlings to do everything, yet he didn't hesitate to throw himself into the mix even at the risk to himself. He led from the front to bring about victory.

Even though he was the Hahoe Mask, he hadn't shown any aversion for the possibility of a Game Over. He hadn't shown fear of the risk that came with a Game Over. If one looked at the footages of the Hahoe Mask, he had always believed what he did was worth the risk of a Game Over. He fought despite the risks.

However, the current Hahoe Mask was different from the one from before.

There was a difference.... Others couldn't tell the difference. However, Whistling had the closest seat in viewing Hyrkan from before and after the change. Moreover, he considered himself to be a friend of Hyrkan, so Whistling was aware of this change.

“If your aim is to earn money, you should act as if this is a business. You should play as if you are playing for the audiences that'll give you money.”

Since Whistling thought of Hyrkan as a friend, he brought up this subject.

“If your goal is to achieve the highest level, you should play the game more efficiently. You shouldn't be here. You should kill Wood Devils or monsters of that ilk to give it your all in leveling up. If you want to become famous, you should do something



controversial. You can challenge one of the 30 great guilds.”

Whistling thought of Hyrkan as a friend. He had thought he had made an amazing friend in an amazing world within a game!

“If you are aiming to complete the Main Scenario Quest, you should adjust your attitude accordingly.”

If he didn't think of Hyrkan as a friend, Whistling wouldn't have spoken this many words.

Hyrkan didn't even let out a sigh at Whistling's words.

Hyrkan felt conflicted. Whistling left Hyrkan alone. He didn't want to pile on more stuff on top of an already conflicted Hyrkan.

The thoughts that weighed upon Hyrkan's mind deepened.

13.

There had been no battles.

There had been no enemies inside the Den of Rebels. There were no allies either. It was just a remnant left behind by the distant past. Hyrkan's party used the Gem Conch to find the Artifacts left behind by the owner of the Den of Rebels.



“I’ve located the boxes. There are three of them.”

There was a grave made out of rocks within the underground city. Underneath the stone grave, three boxes were found. They found a red, black and green colored boxes.

The red box had one scroll, and the black box held three scrolls. The green box couldn’t be opened.

“So this is it?”

“Yes. I’ve seen it before.”

Whistling’s party immediately guessed what was within the green box.

“It probably holds a Record Tree seed. I’ve seen similar boxes near the Record Tree.”

“It is an amazing Artifact.”

When Whistling took the green box, Whistling and his party heard a Quest Announcement. Their Quest Content had just changed. They had to deliver the green box to the Red Elves.

On the other hand, Hyrkan’s Quest Content didn’t change at all. There were no new System Announcement. Unlike his expectation, his Elven Kingdom’s Artifact was elsewhere.



However, Hyrkan didn't get discouraged. He didn't throw a tantrum. He just looked at his surrounding.

'It's clean.'

He looked at the unblemished Bone Armor on his Skeletons. When he saw this sight, he felt silly for being worried, tense, and wary. These emotions had been sucking his blood dry.

His actions up until now looked ridiculous in hindsight.

'I was a scaredy-cat.'

He had flopped around like a scared coward.

Whistling was right.

When he returned to the past, he had prior knowledge, which allowed him to gain rewards. These rewards were set in stone, and he had nothing to lose. This certainty was the reason why he had thrown himself at every obstacles he encountered.

However, this wasn't true any more. Everything he faced was shrouded by the unknown, and he had a lot to lose now.

In the past, he always walked on that fine line where a slip up would result in a Game Over. He had enjoyed walking this fine line



within this game. Now he was avoiding such situations at all cost. He was only filled with wariness now.

‘I thought it was bullshit when people said a person’s position maketh the man. Jeez....’

He had been in self-denial.

Why did Hyrkan become a Necromancer? Did he become one, because he wanted to order around the Skeletons for his convenience?

No. He wanted to make a stage where the Hero Slaughterer would thrive. Skeletons were merely distractions to draw the aggro. They were supposed to be used to set up a stage where Hyrkan would be able take on the most difficult opponent. He never wanted the Skeletons and Golems to make this game easy.

‘What I wanted to do... At the very least, this isn’t it.’

Hyrkan gritted his teeth. The tail end of his lips drooped.

“What is the status of your Quest?”

Whistling queried Hyrkan.

“My Quest hasn’t changed at all.”



“You should come with us just in case. Why don’t you visit the town of the Red Elves with us to deliver the Record Tree seed?”

“No. You guys should complete your Quest. There is only one of that Item. If you lose it, you’ll never be unable to finish this Quest.”

“Still.....”

“I’m sure our Quests are related. If you progress in your Quest to the next stage, I’m sure I’ll receive a clue for my Quest too. You should take care of your own business first. I can confirm it afterwards.”

Hyrkan continued to speak.

“Moreover, I have something I have to do. I have to cross the Urugal mountain range. I’m not in a hurry. You go do your thing.”

Hyrkan cleanly gave up on the idea of traveling with them. Yojori and Joba looked at him with anxious eyes. They were truly worried for him.

Hyrkan had put a lot of effort into this venture for them, yet Hyrkan basically had to kick an empty can down the road.

Instead of speaking unnecessary words, Whistling lightly kicked the red box towards Hyrkan.



Toohk!

The red box came to a stop next to Hyrkan's foot.

"I can't send you back with empty hands. You should keep the Legendary Rank Ancient Power."

At those words, Hyrkan nodded his head.

"All right. We have enough where everyone will get something. There are three Transcendent Rank Ancient Power scrolls, so you guys should divvy it up amongst yourselves. Or do you want to sell it to me?"

"What price do you have in mind?"

"How about 100,000 gold each?"

When the 100,000 gold was mentioned, Yojori and Joba's face was filled with surprise. Whistling's expression hardened.

"You are basically wanting it for free."

"Instead, I'll kill all the Sand Snakes we encounter on the way back. I'll help you guys level up, and you guys can keep the Ingredient Coins as souvenirs. Since we are friends, you should give me a discount."



Finally, Whistling expression finally softened.

“Since we are friends, we have to make sure the deal is fair. I want 200,000 gold.”

On the other hand, Hyrkan’s expression hardened.

“Hey. Do you think 200,000 gold is....”

“Circlet of Purification.”

“.....I guess I can do that. What about you two? What do you guys want to do?”



# Chapter 178 – Hero Slaughterer (1)

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1.

“Will you guys really be ok here?”

They were at the entrance of the Highwood Forest. For the past 5 days, they had a pleasant hunt in the Red Desert and the Highwood Forest. They had been walking in the same direction for a long time. Now Hyrkan and Whistling’s party was facing each other. When they came to a stop, there was only one reason why they would face each other.

It was time for them to part.

Hyrkan directed his question towards the three, and they immediately gave their answer.

“We aren’t children. If it is just the three of us, it’ll be hard to overcome these monsters, but it won’t be a problem if we run away. We can go by ourselves from this point. Also, this has been a lot of fun.”

“You should go take care of your own business. We have to part ways here anyways. If you want to cross the Urugual mountain range, you’ll have to head west. We have to head east. Also, this has been a lot of fun.”

Yojori and Joba didn’t speak one after another. They spoke at the



same time. Their words overlapped, and they even spoke the last sentence at the same time. Their two voices weirdly complemented each other.

It was similar to how they overlapped their words. They glared at each other at the same time. It seemed even their thought patterns were similar.

Each thought the other was intruding on their words, and it made them annoyed.

During all of this, Whistling and Hyrkan spoke to each other.

“Thank you.”

“No, I’m more thankful. If it wasn’t for you, I would have been floundering to find a clue.”

“The Sand Snake Ice Cream tasted pretty good.”

“Yeah. It had a butter vanilla ice cream taste. This game is overflowing with such delicious food, but I have no idea why all the expensive recovery Items were made to taste so bad.”

“You expend a lot to play this game.”

“It is driving me nuts. It is too expensive. I have to grow these expensive Skeletons. I might have to fight more to lower the cost



of labor.”

Whistling shrugged his shoulders.

Hyrkan spoke to Whistling.

“I’ll see you next time. Ah. If someone bothers you, you can contact me. I’ll completely destroy them. In truth, that is my specialty. I mow down bastards, who act arrogant, because they have a little bit of power.

Whistling let out snort at Hyrkan’s unexpected words.

When Whistling let out a smirk of disbelief, Hyrkan kept speaking.

“I’m not kidding. I.... In the past... Yes, in my last game, I was nicknamed the Hero Slaughterer. I took down arrogant Rankers like a demon.”

“It is a great nickname.”

“It was a great nickname.”

After those words ended, the conversation came to a brief pause.

What else was there to talk about?



It will leave much to be desired if they just parted ways right now. They tried to come up with a topic they could talk about.

Still, they would have to part in the end.

“I’ll see you.....”

It was unknown as to when they’ll meet again, but there was no need to forcefully prolong a conversation.

“Let’s have a beer sometime.”

“You want to meet in real life? Wouldn’t that be a little bit too hard?”

At Hyrkan’s question, Whistling spoke calmly.

“It wouldn’t be too hard for me to go to Korea. It isn’t as if I’m barred from going there. If you are in North Korea, it might be hard.”

Hyrkan slightly reacted to the word Korea.

“How did you know I’m Korean? Ah. I guess my Hahoe Mask gave it away.”



Even as Hyrkan spoke the words, he laughed. Even the youtube page managed by Hyrkan was littered with images of the Hahoe Mask, and he always wore one. It was an overwhelming evidence that indicated Hyrkan was Korean.

“Even if you didn’t have the Hahoe Mask, it isn’t too hard to figure out that you are a Korean.”

However, the surest evidence that labeled Hyrkan as a Korean was elsewhere.

“Whenever a game comes out, nine out of the ten Users, who rush to the end of the game, are Koreans.”

Hyrkan’s game style was the prototypical game style of a Korean.

“Isn’t that to be expected? You start a game to reach the end.”

Whistling closed both his eyes, and he nodded his head. Whistling finally confirmed what the Hahoe Mask was pursuing in this game.

Moreover, Hyrkan also came to an understanding too.

“I’ll see you soon.”

“If someone messes with you, just contact me.”



They parted ways.

This was when the others moved in.

2.

Over 10 Users stepped forward. At a glance, one could tell they were equipped with sturdy-looking armors and helmets. They even had their swords unsheathed, and they looked as if they were prepared to cut down any enemies that got in their way.

The members of the Big Smiles appeared to surround them. This should have surprised Whistling, but he snorted instead.

“Hoong.”

He snorted as he sized up his opponents.

‘Are they from the Big Smile guild?’

It wasn’t just Whistling. This should have been a surprising situation, yet Yojori and Joba wasn’t acting surprised at all.

“It has been awhile, since we’ve fought like this.”

“Give me a buff.”



“Give me one first.”

“Don’t be so shameful.”

“Shameful? Maybe I shouldn’t give you a buff if you act that way.”

Yojori and Joba looked very relaxed as they got ready for battle. Yojori put a buff on herself, and Joba immediately activated the [Body Revolution] Skill. It was a skill that flipped the the Intelligence Stat with the Strength Stat.

While the two bickered with each other, Whistling held a conversation as his opponent spoke first.

“You are Whistling of the Hydra Guild?”

Whistling smirked at the question.

“You don’t recognize my face? I never expected someone to check my identity twice. I guess my face is more common than I realized.”

“We are from the Big Smiles guild.”

Their opponents didn’t hide their guild affiliation. Even if they wanted to hide it, they couldn’t. This was the entrance to the Highwood Forest, and the nearby region was the territory of the



Big Smiles guild. If a large group of Users were able to move through this region, it pretty much labeled them as members of the Big Smiles guild. The only other User that could pass through this region with impunity was the Hahoe Mask.

“Also, the Highwood Forest is under our control. This has been confirmed by the 30 great guilds. Your guild hadn’t asked for permission to hunt here. You’ve participated in an illegal hunt inside the Highwood Forest, so what is your excuse?”

They revealed their intention.

“Hoong.”

Whistling once again snorted.

‘How laughable.’

Their words were disingenuous. They just wanted Whistling to say something they could use as a pretext to an attack. If he made an excuse, he would be admitting he had done something wrong. They wanted to exact a pound of flesh from Whistling.

In such a situation, Whistling wasn’t going to make any excuses. He didn’t plan on debasing himself like that. He decided to cleanly settle the account. If they wanted to exact a price, he’ll pay.

“First, I am part of the Hydra guild. I’ll apologize for hunting in a hunting ground recognized officially to be under the control of the



Big Smiles guild. Next, what if I give back an equal compensation? What if we do it through our guild?”

Even as he spoke, Whistling was already aware of what they wanted.

If they really wanted a monetary compensation or an official apology, they would merely have to send the footage of Whistling’s party hunting inside the Highwood Forest to the Hydra guild. Then the guilds would negotiate to bring this issue to a conclusion. This was the normal procedure. It was clean, and the trouble ended right there.

There was no reason for the 10 Users of high level showing signs of wanting to fight him. Moreover, they had waited for Whistling to come out. They wasted time by waiting for him. This basically meant they didn’t want monetary compensation or an apology from the guild.

They wanted the opposite.

“Are the Hydra guild looking down on the Big Smiles guild? Huh? Or is this an attempt at a revenge? Are you trying to avenge your 2nd Head, who was killed by Killer?”

It seemed they didn’t want to bring the guilds into this. They wanted to resolve this as a personal issue.

In Warlord, a personal problem like this was very simple to



resolve.

“We don’t look down on the Big Smiles guild. However, you brought a dozen Users, who are higher in level than us, to catch the three of us. I think that is funny.”

“Ooh-ha-ha”

Joba let out a big laugh. It was a true laugh. It was a laugh full of ridicule, and it was very effective.

“Are you trying to pick a fight with us?”

“Did you really think we would beg for our lives? Is that what you want to hear?”

“It seems words will be useless.”

“Run!”

It happened in a flash.

While they were having a conversation, Whistling let out a short command, and he launched himself towards the User, who he was having conversation with.

Kwahg!



Whistling used Body Slam to make the other User fall.

Pah-aht!

In a flash, Yojori and Joba stepped on Whistling's body to launch themselves forward. They used the gap opened by Whistling to quickly run away.

“We'll go there first!”

“We'll complete the Quest!”

Their footsteps were as rapid as their spoken words. They were experienced in running for an extended amount of time for the sake of completing a Quest. It wouldn't be a misnomer to say their running away speed was on the level of the Hahoe Mask.

Still, their trackers weren't average Users. The rest of the group reacted immediately to such a sudden change in the situation. They immediately prepared to run after Yojori and Joba. Three Users had already ran forward to track them.

While this was going on, Whistling stood back up, and he turned to look at the Users, who had stayed behind.

The already scary face of Whistling crumpled, and he looked more menacing. Just his appearance made one clench one's teeth.



While looking like this this, Whistling barked out like an angry fighting dog.

“Come at me!”

3.

[Hyrkan]

– Level : 240

-Class : Lich

-Title : 245

–

Stats

:

Strength(3219)/Stamina(2009)/Intelligence(2101)/Magic Power(2373)

– In possession of the Ancient Power of ‘Frost’.

Hyrkan checked his Stats on the Bone Wyvern as he flew towards the Heard Fortress ruin.

‘I gained a lot from this hunt.’

His battles always caused him to suffer losses, but he had gained a lot on this venture. First, he had reached level 240. He was able to acquire the level 230 Skills called [Ice Golem] and [Skeleton Exhibition]. The highlight of this venture was the [Skeleton



Exhibition].

The [Skeleton Exhibition] was a similar to the Death Knight's [Commander] Skill.

The [Skeleton Exhibition] was akin to the default ability of the Death Knight in being able to summon 12 Skeleton underlings. The Skill allowed all Skeleton Fragments stored in the Skeleton Exhibition to be summoned all at once. This was why it was called an Exhibition. He had to store the Skeleton Fragments as exhibits. Of course, there was a quota on how many Skeleton Fragments one could put in.

The Skeletons summoned through this method was separate from his normal Skeleton summons. When he reached Rank A in the [Skeleton Exhibition] Skill, he would be able to handle nearly 100 Skeletons at the same time.

The level 230 Skill called [Ice Golem] was something he could learn at a later date. In truth, he didn't need the Skill right now. In Hyrkan's case, the Earth Golem had similar powers to the Ice Golem if he activated the power of Frost. Still, there was no downside in having the skill.

He also earned 4 scrolls containing the Ancient Power. He had three Transcendent Rank scrolls, and the high price he paid for them was as expensive as the Item's name implied. However, Hyrkan didn't think it was expensive. Moreover, his greatest gain was the Legendary Rank scroll.



He was in a happy spot again.

He had found the clue, and he now knew what methods were used to hide the ruins within the Red Desert. Moreover, he also found the identity of the Elven Artifact. If things turn out well, he'll receive help from Whistling, and he'll be able to progress in his Quest more easily. At the very least, he won't be digging a bottomless hole.

On top of everything, he had gained a friend named Whistling.

‘A friend.....’

Hyrkan let out a bitter laugh.

He never thought he would get close to someone within this game ever again. He had avoided developing any deep relationships. He never wanted to suffer that bitter sense of betrayal ever again. He never wanted to buck under the misery he had felt before. He had tried his best to avoid such a relationship, yet his current situation made Hyrkan smile.

‘.....I wonder what Dongsoo hyung is doing right now? Is he playing this game?’

If he continued playing Warlord, he knew this was something he would inevitably have to confront. Hyrkan's life had changed a lot, because of Warlord. He would continue this way of life, and he wouldn't be free of his past until he reached the end of Warlord.



He had no intentions of becoming free from Warlord right now.

‘Yes. Since things have progress this far, I have to see this to the end.’

Hyrkan arrived at the Heard Fortress ruin town on his Bone Wyvern, and the news about Whistling greeted him.

4.

Ahn-jaehyun was looking through the the articles. He focused on searching for the words Hydra and Big Smiles. However, there weren’t many articles of substance compared to the effort he was putting into this search.

Ahn-jaehyun stopped searching for the articles for a moment. He took off his glasses with one hand, and he massaged his eyes with the other.

‘Did the 30 great guilds have some kind of grudge against me in the past life... Nevermind. I guess they were always my mortal enemy.’

Whistling had been killed by the Big Smiles guild.

When he heard the news, Ahn-jaehyun immediately exited the game. Then he brooded over his anger. He was having a hard time



copied with his anger, but he didn't throw anything towards the wall.

‘Before I returned to the past, it was the Stormhunters. Will it be the Big Smiles now?’

In some ways, this might have been inevitable.

‘Yes, it is time for me to bring this to a head.’

The Big Smiles had put out a statement saying Whistling had hunted in the Highwood Forest without permission, and his death had been a fair punishment.

They weren't wrong. Most would accept the the substance behind the Big Smiles guild's announcement.

‘They could have tried to kill us when I was with them. They killed him after I left....’

The problem was the fact that they didn't attack them when the Hahoe Mask and Whistling was together. They targeted Whistling after the Hahoe Mask left.

It was a clear provocation. Since they couldn't take on the Hahoe Mask right now, they decided to punish those close to the Hahoe Mask. This was the substance behind the provocation.



‘They were not aiming for me. They were aiming for my friend....’

This was an obvious provocation, and he was sure it would be exploited again in the future.

‘These bastards are coming at me in interesting ways.’

There were only two choices he could choose.

He could respond to the provocation or he could just endure this.

If he looked at it in a logical manner, it would be harmful for the Hahoe Mask to respond to this provocation. The Hahoe Mask couldn't erase Big Smiles guild from Warlord. Even if they got into a straight fight, it would be a battle of attrition. Moreover, even if the Hahoe Mask attacked the Big Smiles guild and won, he wouldn't be able to steal their Live Channel.

‘I can just trivialize this by saying Whistling only suffered a death....’

Whistling didn't consider his death to be a loss. He had lost a single Item, and he could take a break for 48 hours. That was the extent of his damage, so Whistling didn't ask anything of the Hahoe Mask. He hadn't even notified Hyrkan of his plight. He decided to keep it as a personal matter.

He didn't want to unnecessarily put his friend in an awkward



situation.

‘Still, the mighty Hahoe Mask can’t hide behind his mask. A friend had suffered.’

In other words, his friend was killed, and if he thought only about calculating profits, he was being unfaithful to his friend.

‘Moreover, if I show weakness here, it’ll be the end.’

Above everything else, it was time.

He had to step on the 30 great guilds at some point in time. If he wanted to reach his goal, he had to use the 30 great guilds as his stepping stone. He had to climb upwards by stepping on them. Moreover, he had numerous methods he could use to conduct this war.

When he suffered under the Stormhunters guild, he had come up with a lot of methods for his revenge. The tactics, strategies and tricks he came up with was etched clearly inside his head.

At the time, it was impossible to pull off these methods. However, he now had the Level, Items and money he could use unsparingly.

‘The title of the video..... I think I’ll call it Giant Killer.’



Ahn-jaehyun's face was reflected on the Tablet PC, and one could see a smile on his lips.



# Chapter 179 – Hero Slaughterer (2)

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5.

Heaven helps those who helps themselves.

‘As expected, the surest way to accomplish something is to have the heavens on my side.’

This idiom was like an immutable truth to Heh-bibin, and he felt the meaning of the words in his bones.

‘I never expected this to work out so well.’

The Big Smiles guild members attacked and killed Whistling, who had been hunting inside the Highwood Forest.

It was done openly, so no one could deny it had happened. They were very thorough in eliminating the Pitbull.

If one looked at it from a gains and losses perspective, one would have a hard time saying the Big Smiles guild had gained anything from this.

The immediate concern for the guild was to come up with a method to deal with the Hydra guild. It would be great if it ended in a war of words, but if the problem worsened, they might have to prepare for a war. The act of killing Pitbull had angered the Hydra



guild. Nothing profitable would come from facing a red-faced opponent.

However, a significant number of Big Smiles guild members were supportive of the Users, who had cost the bottomline of Big Smiles guild. They had cheered at learning the decision, action and the execution that had went into killing Pitbull.

Moreover, the ones that participated in the hunt of Pitbull didn't hide their actions. They were unapologetic.

“Whistling hunted in a Big Smiles guild territory without our permission. He is basically a thief. I just chased out a thief from my house.”

“We'd rather have people curse at Big Smiles guild rather than the guild being the butt of everyone's joke.”

“We willingly accept any punishment from the guild. However, we don't think we did anything wrong.”

There had been 11 of them.

Eleven members had participated in the Pitbull hunt, and they had achieved hero status for their actions amongst the normal Big Smiles guild members.

‘Still, I never expected the discontent amongst the members to be this high.’



Basically, the discontent within the guild had reached a boiling point.

After Sinclair's exploits, the Big Smiles guild's standing kept increasing. When they started out at the Black Continent, the Five Stars threatened the name of Top Three. The Big Smiles guild was one of the pillars of this organization.

At the time, Big Smiles' live channel increased in viewership, and they had reached new highs in terms of profits from the sponsors. It was the proof of their success.

However, after Hahoe Mask's Anugas Raid, Big Smiles guild's standing started to drop. Now their standings wasn't so different from what it was before they joined the Five Stars guild.

This damaging result accelerated when the Highwood Forest, which was the main hunting ground of the Big Smiles guild, was allowed to become the playground of the Hahoe Mask.

There had been side effects to the Hahoe Mask's actions. It was getting harder to control their hunting ground. Other Users were starting to follow after the Hahoe Mask's actions. The Big Smiles guild started becoming an entity no one feared.

'The only thing left is to see what the Hydra guild chooses to do.'

The discontent was simmering to a boiling point.



Depending on what the Hydra guild chose to do, this could be an explosive situation. It'll come to a head at some point.

If the situation becomes explosive, the ones in charge of the guild would suffer heavy damages. In recent days, Heh-bibin didn't have a voice in how the guild was being run.

Of course, this situation wouldn't cause Heh-bibin any headaches.

‘This is the best.’

Of course, he was forgetting about the irresistible force called the Hahoe Mask....

6.

Normally, a 10 man party was formed for a Wood Devil hunt. There was an odd quirk to these parties. Over half of the 10 man party was either a Striker or a Swordsman.

At the lowest, there were five Swordsman in the 10 man party. At most, one could see seven Swordsman in a party.

There were two big reasons why this was the case.

It was impossible for Tankers to block the Wood Devil.



The Wood Devil's attack pattern was simple. It swung its arm like a whip or it brought down its arm like a hammer. The attack pattern was simple, yet the power behind the attacks was terrifying. Even if the highest level Tanker with decent equipments and buffs tried to block the attack, one wouldn't be able to withstand a direct hit from the Wood Devil.

The Tankers wouldn't be able to use their usual methods to block the attacks.

So what could one do against the Wood Devil?

One had to defeat the Wood Devil at its own game. The only thing a Tanker could do was to lure and dodge attacks in front of the Wood Devil.

“Chen is down ! ”

“Shit! I'll pull the Aggro.”

“Then I'll save Chen.”

Accidents always happened, so the party had to have a contingency plan. The Tanker was needed as a pinch-hitter.

This was the Tanker's only role. This was why there were so many Swordsman or Strikers compared to the other classes.



“Stop attacking! Stop the attack Cicadas!”

The other reason for having so many Strikers was the method in which damage was given to the Wood Devil.

The Wood Devil had a high magical defence. If one wanted to lower the magical defense, Armor Breaking was needed. The Wood Devil did not wear any defensive gear. It also didn't have any skin or bark, which could act as an armor. The Wood Devil's enormous body was just a mixture of rocks, dirt and trees.

This was why the Strikers were needed to dislodge these rocks, and this was akin to Armor Breaking work. Since one needed a lot of work to pull off this Armor Break, one needed more Users working on the project. This was why Strikers were more desired than the Magicians or Tankers. These Strikers were nicknamed as the Cicadas.

The singing of the Cicadas came to an end. They couldn't attack until the Aggro landed on the Tanker.

Koohng!

The Cicadas started to move once again when the Wood Devil was lured by the new Tanker. The Wood Devil was bring down both its arm in an attempt to crush the Tanker with one blow.

“All right. The pinch-hitter was successful.”



“Start it up again, Cicadas!”

The Strikers once again latched onto the Wood Devil’s body, and they started excavating the stones.

During all of this, the Priests healed anyone at death’s door with Healing Skill. At the same time, the Users with their Buffs expired came to get a full tank of gas again. The Priests worked to restore the Buffs.

Everything was somewhat going to plan when an unexpected variable butted in.

“Do you mind if I ask you a question?”

The question came out of nowhere towards the Priest, who was calculating his Buff Skill Cooldown. The Priest turned his head. There wasn’t a single ounce of suspicion inside the Priest’s head.

“What question? Speak.”

The Priest thought the question had been asked by a comrade. It would be strange if it was someone other than his comrade especially in this situation. Anyone in his shoes would have made the same assumption.

“Ah. It isn’t a difficult question.”



When the Priest turned his head, he became frightened at what he saw.

‘Huhk ! ’

He was so surprised that sound refused to come out of this throat.

The User, who had asked him a question, wore a Hahoe Mask. It was the scariest mask in Warlord, and the User in armor spoke in a friendly manner.

“My friend was PKed here by fucking assholes. I’m here for revenge, and I’m looking for the culprits.”

“Ha...ha...Hahoe....”

The Priest was so shocked that words weren’t coming out of his mouth. Hyrkan continued to speak.

“I’m sorry for interfering with your hunt, but I’m in a hurry. Anyways, let me show you what my friend looks like. He’s the one who was PKed.”

As he spoke, Hyrkan took out a sheet of paper, and he raised it in front of the Priest’s nose. It wasn’t a drawing of a person. It was a picture of a famous fighting dog called a Pitbull Terrier.



“He’s not the type to be pushed around. However, in a bout of bad luck, he was beaten and killed. He couldn’t do anything, since his opponents roamed in a party that numbered around ten Users. This is why I’m trying to hunt them down with my group.”

Hyrkan turned to look backwards. There were 30 Skeleton Warriors a good distance away. They looked like they were ready to rush their enemies. Hyrkan turned back to look at the Priest.

“Anyways, I’m looking for the bastards, who attacked my friend. I don’t know their identities nor do I know what they look like. My friend is prideful, so he won’t tell me what I want to know. Ah!!”

At that moment, Hyrkan acted as if he had an epiphany. He lightly poked at the Priest’s left chest with his finger. The Priest backed up in fright.

Hyrkan spoke to the Priest as he laughed.

“For your information, those bastards had the same emblem as the one on your chest. They had that ridiculous smiley face on them. So do you think will be able to tell me their identities? You look like someone, who might know the answer.”

“It’s the Hahoe Mask!”

At that moment, the name Hahoe Mask swept through the battlefield. The name was spoken not by the Priest in front of Hyrkan. It was the other Priest. When his name was spoken,



everyone turned their gazes towards him.

“Hahoe Mask?”

“Crazy.....!”

The ones, who had the luxury of being able to turn their attention away from the battle, focused on the Hahoe Mask.

“What? What’s going on?”

“Did you say it was the Hahoe Mask? We are being attacked by him right now?”

The Users, who couldn’t afford to look away, asked questions as they felt a bout of anxiety.

Moreover, they weren’t the only ones, who reacted to the name of the Hahoe Mask.

– Hahoe Mask? Hahoe Mask made an appearance there?

– Support! Send support!

– Where?

The Level Up support team was helping this party, so they were



receiving a live update. When the Level Up support team received the information, they were taken aback.

He kept looking at the frozen Priest as he spoke.

“I just wanted to question you in a quiet manner. I’m sorry for intruding on your hunt. I’m really sorry.”

Of course, there wasn’t an ounce of contrition behind his words. Hyrkan’s words sounded playful, but his lips didn’t even twitch upwards.

“I guess you are too busy with the hunt to talk. I’ll return after you finish your hunt.”

Even now the guild members didn’t dare to surround Hyrkan. They didn’t even attempt it.

Hyrkan turned his head to look at the battlefield. The Wood Devil was causing a big ruckus, but the Big Smiles guild members just stared at him. When he turned to look at them again, they flinched in surprise.

Hyrkan held the piece of paper in his hand, and he showed them the drawing of a Pitbull Terrier.

“This is my friend. If you know, who PKed my friend, you should tell me....”



Koo-ooong, kooh-ooong!

“Ooh-ahk. Shit!”

At that moment, a Tanker fell. The User was nailed to the ground by the Wood Devil’s fist. The User let out a scream for help.

However, his guild mates ignored his cry for help as they kept staring at Hyrkan.

Hyrkan spoke to them.

“You can give those bastards a message. I’ll put all of you guys into the slaughter house.”

It was a declaration of war.

Four Golems appeared. They were of Earth, Fire, Ice and Steel. They were imposing, and they were sent towards the 10 Big Smiles guild members.

As if he wasn’t satisfied with this, the Skeleton Warriors appeared from between the enormous legs of the Golems. They attacked the Users.

Of course, the Users fought back.



“Mega Flare!”

The Magician attacked the Golem with a powerful magical spell.

“Shield Crush ! ”

Gwah-ahng!

The Tankers used their Shields to send the Skeleton Warriors flying.

Kah-ahng, kah-ahng!

The Strikers fought a fierce battle with the Skeleton Warriors. Weapons clashed, and damage started to appear on armors on both sides.

“Buff! Buff!”

“Wait a minute!”

The Priest’s desperately tried to douse the fire.

It was a bedlam. Outside of this pandemonium, a private battle was occurring.



A man was wearing a tattered armor with the Big Smiles guild logo. He had lost his helmet, and his face was revealed. His face was marked with wounds from a sword.

The User looked to be in rough shape as he lay spread eagle on the floor. A pillar-like leg was pressing down on the User's chest, so he was unable to get up. He was completely subdued.

“Cheap bastard. You threw sand in a one on one battle!”

The User's mouth was the only thing he was able to flap.

“When did I say I won't spray sand? I said I won't use any Skills. Anyways, aren't you going to force a logout??”

At the User's words, Hyrkan replied in a composed manner.

“You son of a bitch. We wouldn't have killed Pitbull if we weren't prepared to face you.”

Hyrkan smiled instead of getting mad.

“So why didn't you guys attack me? Huh? Were you guys scared of me? Did you guys attack Pitbull because he was less scary?”

“You provoked us first!”



“If someone heard you, one would think our relationship soured only recently.”

Hyrkan spoke as he stabbed at the User’s chest with his sword. The sword slipped in deep between the already crumbling armor. The User didn’t scream, since he felt no pain.

“Weren’t we on bad terms even before we crossed the Urugal mountain range? Now that I think about it, you guys tried fuck me over in the Anugas Raid. Did you participate in that?”

“I’ll get my revenge soon. We’ll do to you what we did to Pitbull.”

At those words, Hyrkan pull out the sword, and he stabbed down again. The repeated stab made the User’s HP drop to zero. After finishing his work, he turned to look at his Golems, Skeleton Warriors and the Big Smiles guild members.

At that moment, Hyrkan gave an order. The Golems and the Skeleton Warriors, who were relentlessly attacking, stopped.

“What?”

“What’s going on?”

A clap needed two palms to strike each other. When the Skeleton Warriors and Golems stopped their attack, the Big Smiles guild members also stopped their attack.



When this sudden peace arrived, Hyrkan walked as he spoke.

“I’m sorry for interrupting your hunt. A User, who was in your hunting party, was killed by me. It was a personal matter. The rest of you can continue your hunt. Please enjoy yourselves, and I wish you luck on gaining good drops.”

As he spoke, Hyrkan spoke with the most contemptible and nasty smile full of ridicule on his face.

Hyrkan had started his work to catch the big giant.



# Chapter 180 – Hero Slaughterer (3)

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8.

-Did you guys hear about the news from the Highwood Forest?

-L. Isn't that the location of Hahoe Mask's recent hunt?

-L. He is still hunting inside the Highwood Forest.

-L. Of course, everyone is aware of that fact. It had been only couple weeks, since the Hahoe Mask uploaded the footage of him soloing the Wood Devil!

-L. No, he isn't hunting monsters anymore. He is hunting down Big Smiles guild members.

These people enjoyed watching Warlord. They were also interested in the User named the Hahoe Mask. He made their hearts flutter from excitement. They were very interested in the activities of the Hahoe Mask, since he attempted tasks that was considered to be impossible to solo. They cheered when he overcame the odds.

He was able to solo Boss Monster Raids, and he was doing the Main Scenario Quest by himself.

Moreover, he was able to oppose the 30 great guilds. These



exalted organizations were almost untouchable as if they were placed high in the sky, and even the influential Underfoot guilds could do nothing against them.

This made people become more fanatical about the Hahoe Mask.

These people were romantics.

Everyone could imagine themselves doing what the Hahoe Mask did. While anyone could imagine doing it, the Hahoe Mask actually took action to make these ideas into reality.

This inflamed the romanticism inside the hearts of people.

-Did he declare war against the Big Smiles guild?

-L No. He says he is out for revenge.

-L-Revenge? Against whom?

-L. Pitbull and the Hahoe Mask are friends. Recently, the Big Smiles guild killed Pitbull. He is avenging Pitbull.

-L. From what I heard, the Hahoe Mask didn't touch anyone except the 10 guild members, who hunted down Pitbull. He even apologized to the unrelated party members for intruding on the hunt.



This was the most important part of his plan. Ahn-jaehyun had to sidestep the trappings of the romanticism his actions might evoke.

‘I like where the public opinions are heading.’

He sipped his coffee, and he looked at the reaction caused by his actions. Ahn-jaehyun was satisfied.

‘Yes, this is the correct answer.’

The act of fighting the 30 great guilds had a quality of romanticism. Everyone could imagine doing it, yet no one could do it. Of course, even the Hahoe Mask couldn’t fight the 30 great guilds in a fair fight.

Before he had returned to the past, he had felt this truth deep within his bones. He had made enemies of the Stormhunters guild, and this had turned the entirety of the 30 great guilds against him. He had fought them like a crazed dog. However, he now realized how illogical and pointless such an act was.

This was especially true for Ahn-jaehyun, since it didn’t make sense to cause a Game Over to all of his opponents, because they were wearing the same uniforms. It was a dangerous way to play this game, and it was also stupid.

‘Nothing good will come from messing with the normal guild members.’



Before he returned to the past, he had been very radical in his actions as the Hero Slaughterer. He cut down anyone that got in his way. This was why he was nicknamed the Slaughterer. He never hesitated, and he had no mercy.

If he looked back on it, he knew it had been a mistake. It didn't matter how or why he killed the Users, but in the end, they were revived from their Game Over after 48 hours. They would be made whole again, and their animosity towards him would grow.

Basically, the hatred mounted and the number of Users he wronged increased to a point where they took action by attacking the Hero Slaughterer..

In truth, when the Stormhunters guild announced their war against the Hero Slaughterer Hyrkan, not everyone was willing to follow their lead. The normal guild members hated being dragged into such conflicts. There was no reason why they would enjoy it. It wasn't as if killing a single User allowed them to gain treasures. Moreover, if they weren't careful, there was a high risk that they would suffer a Game Over. The normal guild members were basically being forced into the hunt, so why would they like such a scenario?

However, once those normal guild members died at the hands of the Hero Slaughterer, their eyes flipped over from anger. Even if they weren't told to catch Hyrkan, they threw their bodies towards him.



It would be difficult to convince the first wave of Users to throw their bodies against him. However, it wouldn't be too hard to convince the second and third wave of Users.

Ahn-jaehyun applied the lesson he had learned to his current actions.

‘It is unnecessary to galvanize the regular guild members.’

His targets had to be precise.

The Hahoe Mask left alone the Users, who had nothing to do with the attack on Pibtbull. He only attacked the guilty, since they wouldn't be able to complain even if they were killed.

Of course, none of the Big Smiles guild members would clap their hands at the Hahoe Mask's actions. They wouldn't be happy, but it would make them think. It would make them wonder if it was worth messing with the Hahoe Mask.

This was why....

‘The Big Smiles guild officers will now gather to come up with a plan.’

The normal guild members will now want the higher ups to take care of the problem!



The normal guild members would choose to remain as spectators.

This was why the Hahoe Mask expressed to the normal guild members that he wasn't the enemy. He even saved some, who were in trouble.

He used numerous methods. He sometimes killed his target, and he retreated quickly. He purposefully approached a Big Smiles guild party without any of his targets included within the group, and he struck up amicable conversations with them. He even gave them permission to contact him, and he gave encouraging words to the hunt parties. From the perspective of the guild members, the Hahoe Mask's words were far from sounding friendly, but they felt relieved from not being PKed. There were even times when the Hahoe Mask had saved a Big Smiles guild member in trouble during a hunt. He also gave them tips on how to more effectively hunt down the Wood Devils.

Everyone knew he wasn't doing this out of pure kindness, but they were thoroughly convinced that the Hahoe Mask would only attack his targets.

‘In the past, this method wouldn't have worked.’

Of course, if the Hahoe Mask was someone insignificant, this would be a different story. Every one of them would have attacked him on sight. However, the Hahoe Mask was no longer a User that could be taken down by a single party.



This was the difference between the prior Hero Slaughterer Hyrkan, and the current Hahoe Mask.

He needed the current level of power to pull off this plan.

“Hmmm.”

He had enough power now. He was able to leisurely smell the coffee as he hummed a tune even as he faced an enemy called the 30 great guilds.

‘If I chase their tail like this, the Big Smile guild’s reputation will suffer. They’ll try to catch me... I would be very grateful if they chose to catch me using a bait and a small force.’

The power he possessed gave him the luxury to be able to think a move ahead.

This required power, and the current Ahn-jaehyun possessed that power.

9.

“What did you just say?”

“We’ve received information saying the Hahoe Mask had appeared within the Highwood Forest again. I think it would be best to take a break today.”



“What are you talking about? You want to take a break?”

“The current situation is a bit muddled right now.”

The speaker, Jigwan, was a Level 235 member of the Big Smiles guild. He was a Ranked User, who operated while maintaining the very high level. This was why he was flabbergasted by his comrade's words.

As he maintained this dumbfounded look, he lightly swiveled his head to look at the atmosphere of his surrounding. His party members had finished getting ready for the battle with the Wood Devil. Some refused to meet his eyes, but others boldly met his eyes. However, all of them were in disagreement with him.

This was why he quickly realized what was going on, so Jigwan gritted his teeth.

“You guys....”

“We aren't saying you did anything wrong. You did good. We are almost thankful that you took the initiative. You went through with it. At the very least, we won't be called cowards by others before we go into battle thanks to you.”

Jigwan had been about to erupt in rage, but his comrade shut him up by talking over him.



“No.....”

“However, if a problem arises here, it’ll be a detriment to you.”

It seemed his comrade was determined to speak his mind. It was as if he had prepared a speech for this eventuality, so he poured out his words towards Jigwan.

“It isn’t as if the high ranking people will do anything for you. It isn’t as if they are ordering us to form a hunting party to catch the Hahoe Mask. If you act too hastily, you are the only one, who will suffer.”

“Hey!”

The power of his rapid-fire words were very effective. Jigwan was made momentarily speechless.

“I’m sorry.”

At the short phrase, Jigwan shut his mouth as if a key had been turned.

Jigwan could no longer raise his voice. His party member’s words made Jigwan realize the underlying reasons behind the other User’s words.

‘Shit.’



This made Jigwan more angry.

It was so clear that he would have to accept the current reality.

‘What did I do wrong!’

His anger turned towards the Hahoe Mask.

‘That damn bastard. It is all the Hahoe Mask’s fault....’

At the same time, his anger moved on from the Hahoe Mask to a different existence.

‘Why are we so afraid of a single person? Why do I have to suffer like this, because of their cowardice?’

He focused his anger on the executive officers, who lead the Big Smiles guild.

‘I’ve worked my butt off for the Big Smiles.’

From the birth of the game of Warlord, he had gotten close to the members of this guild. They were so close that they called each other hyung and dongsaeng. His relationship with the other guild members spanned across a good amount of time, and this was why the betrayal hurt so much.



Jigwan wasn't someone that would stand being treated so poorly.

This was especially true, since his actions were all for the benefit of the Big Smiles guild.

At that moment, he thought about the last time he was treated right.

'This would have never happened when Heh-bibin was in charge of the guild.'

In the past, their guild didn't have a guild master. The executive officers ran the guild. At the time, Heh-bibin had wielded a considerable amount of power within the guild.

During that time, Jigwan had been treated very well. He was always given full support, and the small problems were taken care of by the guild. The guild didn't even ask any questions when taking care of the problem.

Heh-bibin also gave breaks to Users tired from leveling up by purposefully putting them in youtube videos or a live broadcast. This resulted in them gaining some spending money from the appearance fee.

At the very least, he wouldn't have been treated like a leper, because he had done something that needed to be done.



He wasn't the only one, who felt this way. There was a significant number of members, who shared his view.

This was the reason why they supported Heh-bibin.

‘Heh-bibin is right. He is right about all of this.’

This was the reason why they put their power behind Heh-bibin's ideas.

10.

When he heard Pitbull had been killed, Sinclair contacted the Hydra guild first. If things went sideways here, he knew his life would get very complicated.

This was why Sinclair sent the Hydra guild a proposal.

He wanted to resolve the current situation through war of words. They could argue over who was in the wrong through words. He suggested that they shouldn't worsen the current atmosphere by settling this through armed conflicts.

At the time, the tone of the conversation hadn't been too bad. Unlike Sinclair's worries, the Hydra guild didn't seem inclined to fight them head on. They were about to bury this incident in a quiet manner.



Sinclair was sure this had all been quietly resolved..

‘Hahoe Mask. That damn bastard....:

Everything turned into a mess when the Hahoe Mask made his appearance.

The Hahoe Mask started to avenge his friend’s death.

‘That little bastard. I never expected him to act this way.’

The Hahoe Mask used a method he had never used before. He only eliminated his targets. He worked in an arrogant manner, and he avenged his friend in a way that was only possible for the Hahoe Mask.

The method used by the Hahoe Mask turned out to be more troublesome than expected. If the Hahoe Mask waged a war against the entirety of the Big Smiles guild, Sinclair would have used this opportunity to declare war on the Hahoe Mask.

Sinclair had always wanted to kill the Hahoe Mask. If he attacked out of his own volition, Sinclair would have been thankful.

However, he hadn’t done that. The Hahoe Mask made this into a personal revenge play.

This was now a private matter between Users. If a 30 great guild



stepped forward to interfere, the fallout would be huge. This was the biggest problem they would face. If they were to kill the Hahoe Mask, they would have to put up with the big fall out. When the potential for loss was this large, no one dared to act in a rash manner.

This was why the meeting of the officers was called into order.

However, another problem arose at this point in time.

Sinclair was excluded from the meeting of the officers.

‘Heh-bibin..... I’m sure that bastard planned this.’

First, Sinclair wasn’t officially an executive officer. It was true that he was the best ace inside the Big Smiles guild. However, by definition, the guild master, and the two sub-guild masters were considered to be the executive officers.

Right now Sinclair had no choice, but to wake up to what was going on. This incident had the fingerprints of Heh-bibin all over it.

Heh-bibin had been treated like a useless sack of wheat until now, but it seemed Heh-bibin had found a way to amplify his voice.

Heh-bibin’s voice was strengthened by the opinions of the regular guild members. Heh-bibin hadn’t been overt about his



actions. He had been a huge advocate for those guild members, who had killed the Pitbull. Heh-bibin spoke numerous times about the guild needing to protect these guild members.

Everyone, who hunted Pitbull, probably stood on Heh-bibin's side. On top of it all, the users operating within the Highwood Forest would also side with Heh-bibin. These were high level Users, who were over level 230. They were the main fighting power of the Big Smiles guild.

‘The machination being played by Heh-bibin is no joke.’

If one thought about it, Heh-bibin's actions were chilling, amazing and a bit ridiculous.

This was only a game.

Why would he do such an act over a game?

This thought brushed by Sinclair's mind. Of course, Sinclair immediately rejected such notions.

‘This game wasn't a joke from the start.’

Warlord wasn't a simple game. The makers of this game and the people, who played this game, invested excessive amount of assets into Warlord. Too many things were shoved into this game.



This game was supposed to be run and managed by the AI, but now it had become a completely different game.

“Tsk.”

He clicked his tongue, and Sinclair organized the complicated thoughts inside his head. He simplified the situation.

‘If we choose to catch the Hahoe Mask, we have to go all in. If we decide not to catch him, we have to be bold in our negotiations with him. If we put together a half-assed team of 100 guild members to hunt him down....’

He hoped the meeting of officers would avoid choosing the worst option.

The meeting of the officers came to an end.

11.

“Brooks. Why are you agreeing to such a ridiculous proposal?”

When the results of the meeting was declared, Sinclair spoke in an accusatory tone towards Brooks.

-Both Apollo and Heh-bibin made a fuss, so what can I do?



“Apollo? What are you talking about?”

-Apollo is supporting Heh-bibin's decision. If I have to oppose two sub-guildmasters, I need a good reason.

“The reason.....

-Are you saying we should accept the death of the eleven members, who participated in the Pitbull hunt? We can't give everything to the Hahoe Mask. What would happen to my name? The normal guild members are treating the Users, who attacked Pitbull, like heroes.

At the mention of heroes, Sinclair snorted.

“They aren't heroes. Does that mean the Hahoe Mask is the Hero Slaughterer, since he killed them?

– Heh-bibin maneuvered to bring this about. In truth, I can't do anything about it now. We have to put this to rest by killing the Hahoe mask.

Sinclair barely kept himself from snorting again.

“We are going to kill the Hahoe Mask? How are we going to do that? Do you really think you'll be able to kill him with only 100 Users?”



-This is different. We have 11 surefire baits that will net the Hahoe Mask.

Sinclair had a thought when he heard those words.

‘They succeeded in convincing Brooks.’

Brooks was trying to convince him, and Sinclair knew he wouldn’t be able to talk Brooks out of this.

In the end, Heh-bibin had been successful in his plot. He pulled Apollo to his side, and he had convinced Brooks.

What would happen next?

Heh-bibin will push himself to the fore again.

“Anyways, I’ll have nothing to do with this venture.”

-If the Killer doesn’t join, there will be a lot of talk.

“It would be worse to fail with me included in the hunt. You should leave me out, so there will be an excuse if you guys fail.”

-Do you really think we will fail?

Sinclair knew Heh-bibin wouldn’t be satisfied with his victory.



When one succeeds in turning the table, one wants something more than just turning the tables. Heh-bibin will try to create a situation where others cannot turn the tables against him.

Then what?

“From Heh-bibin’s perspective, he has nothing to gain from the plan succeeding. Please use your head, Brooks.”

In the end, the buck stopped with the guild master. Brooks would bear the responsibility of all actions taken by the guild.

-You really think of me as an idiot. I brought about a war with Triple Wings alongside the Hands guild, yet you treat me like this.

“I spoke too harshly. I apologize.”

-No, you don’t have to apologize.

The conversation ended there.

Eleven Users were facing a Wood Devil. It was quite common to come across the sight of a party hunting down a Wood Devil. However, this party’s composition was very unique. Seven of the 11 Users were Strikers.

Of course, a Wood Devil Raid needed a high number of Swordsman class Users, but seven Strikers was most definitely a



unique composition.

Maybe this was the reason why the Wood Devil hunt wasn't going well.

Moreover, a good number of Users were having a hard time focusing on the Wood Devil hunt.

“What about the Hahoe Mask?”

“I don't see him yet.”

“Be on your guard, but let's focus on the hunt.”

“Be careful! If we are killed by the Wood Devil, this was all for naught!”

Their conversations was the proof.

In reality, they weren't gathered here to hunt the Wood Devil.

They were bait.

After the meeting of the officers, the decision was handed down to the troops. They had decided to hunt down the Hahoe Mask. This was why this hunting team was formed. This team would simultaneously be a bait and a weapon pointed towards the Hahoe



Mask.

The plan was simple. If the bait was taken, the Hahoe Mask hunting team would move in. If the bait was left alone, they'll announce that the Hahoe Mask's absence meant he was conceding defeat.

“I hope the Hahoe Mask shows up today....”

The seven Users, who were placed into the party as bait, waited for the appearance of the Hahoe Mask. They were confident in this plan. If there had been no preparations, it would be very difficult to kill the Hahoe Mask. However, they had made thorough preparations for the appearance of the Hahoe Mask, and they really believed they would be able to take him down.

Shweeee!

Two Wyverns appeared above their heads.

Hwah-roo-roo!

One Wyvern was made out of flame, and the other was made out of bones. It was the Wyvern Fire Golem and the Bone Wyvern. The two Wyverns dove downwards, and it was a scary sight. However, the eleven Users welcomed the appearance of the two Wyverns.

“It's the Hahoe Mask!”



“He is finally here!”

“Be careful ! ”

“If needed, just disengage and run away from the Wood Devil!”

Two Wyverns landed on the ground. However, that was all they did. The two Wyverns just looked at the eleven Users, who were battling the Wood Devil.

‘Huh?’

‘What the hell?’

They had expected a terrifying offensive attacks, and this unexpected situation made the eleven Users flustered.

“What’s going on?”

“Should we run away?”

They were still battling the Wood Devil, and the Users were unable to assess the situation. They were asking for an answer.

However, the one to give the answer wasn’t one of their comrades.



“Ah. You guys are all gathered here. Hello.”

Hahoe Mask made his appearance as he gave his greeting. He cleared his throat then he paused before taking out a paper. The paper held the drawing of a Pitbull Terrier's face.

“This is my friend. He said my act of revenge serves no purpose. He said he forgives you all. I came here to tell you that. Have fun with your hunt. I hope you received a good drop.”

Hyrkan turned his back after speaking, and he left the battlefield with the Bone Wyvern and the Fire Golem in tow. He headed towards the north.

“W...What the fuck?”

This was too unexpected. In such a situation, the announcement from the Voice Talk broke them out from their stupor.

-Hahoe Mask is going north.

-The bait team will retreat to the back.

-The Hahoe Mask hunt team has to take down the Hahoe Mask at all cost. Use all methods available to you.

The Hahoe Mask hunt team started to move.



‘Ah, wait a moment.’

‘Hahoe Mask is.....:

In such an urgent and unexpected situation, none in the bait team was able to comprehend what had just happened.



# Chapter 181 – Hero Slaughterer (4)

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13.

Hyrkan ran full tilt as he ran away towards the northern region of the Highwood Forest. At times, he saw Users passing by him at high speed.

‘By the look of their Setting, they went all out for speed. It seems they are dead set on catching me.’

These Users had put all their Stat Points into Strength. They had Item Settings geared towards speed, and they had received all kinds of Speed Buffs. They even had consumable Items that could boost their speed. Moreover, they were experienced in running quickly through difficult terrains.

‘How many..... If I combine the number of Strikers and the rear support team, will they number between 100 to 200? Will it be around 150 of them?’

They would be blocking Hyrkan’s path shortly.

When he saw what they were about to do, Hyrkan smiled.

‘This is the best outcome I could have hoped for.’

He was being put into a desperately dangerous situation.



They were on the Hahoe Mask's tail, and eventually the body would be caught.

When they caught up to the body of the Hahoe Mask, it was obvious what the Big Smiles guild planned to do.

However, Hyrkan wasn't flustered. Of course, this was going as planned, and he wanted this to play out like this.

All work was like this. If one wanted good result, one had to go through a step by step process.

This venture was no different.

Giant Killing.

It was as the word implied. He would be taking down one of the 30 great guilds, which was akin to taking down a giant. He couldn't do it with only with viciousness and balls.

First, he had to fight within his weight class.

This was why he had carried out this ridiculous revenge plot.

It was suicide for a Flyweight boxer to fight a Heavyweight boxer on the Heavyweight boxer's term.



The next problem was something he had learned in the past after fighting a war with the 30 great guilds.

The act of slaying the giant was much easier than dealing with the aftermath.

If he had killed all eleven Users, the Pitbull revenge play would have come to an end. He would have to drop his vendetta. Hyrkan wouldn't have been able to use revenge as a cover in attacking the Big Smiles guild. If he attacked after completing his revenge, he would basically be openly announcing his hostility towards the Big Smiles guild. On the flip side, this implication also held true for the Big Smiles guild. Since the revenge play had come to an end, they would have to try to hide their conduct. They would have to catch the Hahoe Mask in secret.

‘I forgave them.’

He had forgiven them.

He had brought the issue to a clean end.

Hahoe Mask had appeared in front of the Users, who had hunted down Pitbull, and he made it clear that he had forgiven them. He also apologized to them, and he gave them a sincere blessing. He wished them luck in getting good drops.

So what would happen if the Big Smiles guild moved immediately



to kill the Hahoe Mask?

Who will be blamed for starting the war?

From that moment on, it would no longer be a revenge play.

‘People always root for the underdog.’

The giant would be attacking a small private individual. They would attack him in an one-sided and indiscriminate manner.

‘From now on, no matter what I do to fuck them over they won’t be able to complain. They’ll just have to take it.’

If this small individual suffered in such a manner, it didn’t matter what he did. He could use whatever methods or tricks in his arsenal. His actions would be forgiven by the public. Moreover, people will actually cheer him on.

From now on, no one would point a finger in admonishment when they witness what he had planned. They’ll give him a standing ovation.

14.

“What?”



“That is..... The Hahoe Mask didn’t harm the bait team.”

The Hahoe Mask hunting plan had been approved in the meeting of the executive officers. The next topic was to decide, who would be in command of the operation, and Apollo was given the baton.

“What the hell are you talking about?”

“That is..... The bait team is in a state of confusion right now, so I’ll have to listen to them a little bit more. However, from what I gather, it seems the Hahoe Mask had forgiven them. No, he didn’t forgive the bait team, but he forgave the Users, who hunted down Pitbull.”

No one had complained when Apollo was handed the command.

Apollo thought this was a great opportunity for him.

When he killed the Hahoe Mask, Apollo’s power within the Big Smiles would increase significantly. This will allow Apollo to fix his weakness.

Apollo had basically bought his way into power. He was also placed in the sub-guild master chair, because he was perceived to be easier to control by Brooks. Moreover, unlike Heh-bibin, he didn’t have the ability, awareness or the patience to build up his own power base. He would never be a threat to Brooks.

Of course, none of the Big Smiles guild members had



unconditionally accepted his promotion. In such a situation, he had the chance to bring about the killing of the Hahoe Mask. All the guild members wanted the Hahoe Mask taken down, and he would have the support of the normal guild members if he succeeded. This task represented a symbolism he could use to gain power.

Of course, there was a catch. The catch was that he had to put his voice behind Heh-bibin. Furthermore, in return, Heh-bibin promised to support Apollo from now on.

If such a deal wasn't in place, he wouldn't have risked stabbing Brooks in the back. Brooks was the one, who had placed him within the Big Smiles guild.

“So what?”

The fact that the Hahoe Mask hadn't bothered with the bait team didn't change anything for Apollo.

“What are you trying to say? What's going on with the Hahoe Mask hunt?”

He didn't care about the status of the bait team. The only thing important was the fact that Apollo had the chance to kill the Hahoe Mask. He had the chance to break the Hahoe Mask's wrists.

“We are in pursuit. We are also intermittently engaging him in battle.”



“What is the current situation?”

“We’ll be able to corner him. Our hunting team is faster than him.”

They had made a lot of preparations. The Highwood forest was a difficult stage, so the elites of the guild were all gathered there. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that any Big Smiles guild member with a modicum of skill was gathered there.

“Then catch him for me.”

“Yes.”

At Apollo’s words, there wasn’t much more to say. The one giving the report didn’t give any advices to Apollo.

It wasn’t as if Apollo was the only one, who wanted to kill the Hahoe Mask. There wasn’t a single guild member within the Big Smiles guild, who looked favorably at the Hahoe Mask. Moreover, the bait team was bait. When a fish bites the bait, one doesn’t worry if the bait was fine or damaged. No fisherman would worry about whether a bait was intact when one had to reel in the fish.

“Anyways, he is about to reach the border between the Red Desert and the Highwood Forest.”



“Red Desert?”

“Yes, we’ll be able to surround him there.”

“All right.”

Everyone’s favorite prey was heading north.

The Red Desert was acknowledged to be dangerous by the Big Smiles guild. It was a place where they forbid their guild members from hunting, yet they were heading there.

15.

The Hahoe Mask was surrounded.

‘There are quite a lot of them.’

If one stood atop the large trees filling up the Highwood forest, one could catch sight of the Red Desert. One could see about thirty Strikers surrounding the Hahoe Mask to the north.

‘They made pretty extensive preparations.’

The encircling net was tight.

At any point in time, the encircling net could let fly their swords



towards Hyrkan. They were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the Hahoe Mask Hunt.

At the same time, they were waiting for something.

‘The Hahoe Mask’s Skeletons hasn’t made their appearance yet.’

‘We have to eliminate whatever the Hahoe Mask brings to bear before we can eliminate him.’

‘This might turn into a prolonged battle.’

There were two ways to hunt the Hahoe Mask.

The first method was to kill the Hahoe Mask before he could bring out all his cards. The other method was to force the Hahoe Mask to bring out all his cards then kill him.

The former method seemed easy, but the Hahoe Mask had a frightening amount of skill in battle even if he didn’t have his Skeletons and Golems. In the Argardo Raid, Immoral Prince Raid and the Anugas raid, he showed such proficiency that all Strikers praised the Hahoe Mask’s peerless skills.

This was why the second option was preferable.

It was to force the Hahoe Mask to bring out all his cards!



It wasn't easy, but it wasn't impossible. The Hahoe Mask could not summon an unlimited number of Skeletons and Golems.

They have over 50 Strikers, and twice the number of magicians and priests....

There were close to 150 Users gathered here, and these weren't the normal Users of Big Smiles guild. These were the best of the best of the Big Smiles guild, so the task of eliminating the Hahoe Mask's familiars shouldn't be too difficult for them. These Users thought of Big Smiles as being the best, so they considered themselves to be the best.

This was why they were forcing this confrontation.

However, even in this harsh atmosphere, Hyrkan was able to speak up.

“Why are you guys attacking me?”

Hyrkan used this lull to ask a question. The voice asking the question was very loud.

Of course, all the Users were focused on Hyrkan's every movement, so they were all able to hear his words.

They were taken aback by the question.



‘What?’

They would have preferred if the Hahoe Mask was overbearing. They would have had an easier time accepting swear words from the Hahoe Mask than what they were getting right now.

Instead, he had ask them a question.

Why were they attacking him?

No one could answer that question.

Hyrkan once again asked them a question.

“Didn’t I forgive the Users, who hunted down Pitbull?”

Hyrkan didn’t even bother to unsheathe his weapon as he spoke. He had his arms crossed as if he was lecturing them.

“I’m pretty sure I’ve expressed my intentions not too long ago. I will no longer pursue my revenge. I haven’t attacked the remaining eight Users. Moreover, I didn’t mess with the Big Smiles guild members hunting within the Highwood Forest.”

This was obvious, but the Hahoe Mask hunt team hadn’t known about this fact. They had just chased after Hyrkan.



After receiving a report from the bait team, there was no way Apollo would have informed the Hahoe Mask hunt team of these facts.

“So why is the Big Smiles guild keep trying to attack me? Are you guys trying to punish me as a guild?”

The continuous questions created a disordered atmosphere amongst the Big Smiles guild members.

‘What the hell is he talking about?’

‘He forgave them? That actually happened?’

In the end, someone had to step forward to rile up the troops. The User, who was leading the Hahoe Mask hunt team, had the level, experience and the ability to realize this fact. He quickly stepped forward.

“It is as you said, Hahoe Mask. This is a punishment. As you probably know, the relationship between the Big Smiles guild and you is bad enough where we don’t need to explain ourselves in eliminating each other.”

These were the words spoken previously by Hyrkan towards the Big Smiles guild.

This was why Hyrkan nodded his head.



“So it is a punishment. Therefore, I can use whatever methods and tricks to survive this assault?”

“You can try. We aren’t weak. We’ll be able to catch a prey like you, who is right in front of our eyes.”

After speaking those words, the leader of the hunt team used the Voice Talk to give orders to the Strikers surrounding the Hahoe Mask.

- You guys attack the Hahoe Mask first, then he’ll start using the his cards.

- When I give the signal, the 1st team will move. The 2nd team will be ready to counteract any changes. The 3rd team will act as support.

- If you are in trouble, I want you guys to retreat to the backline, so you can receive healing from the Priests.

- The Magicians should look out for the signal to start the magical bombardment.

There was no reason why they should give Hyrkan more time. If he wouldn’t pull out his cards, they would have to force it out of him.



Now everyone was tense as they waited for a signal. The leader of the hunt team was mulling over when to give out the signal.

Hyrkan still didn't show any signs of fighting. He continued to speak with his arms folded. It was as if he wanted to buy some time.

“Are any of you subscribed to my youtube page? Raise your hands.”

Of course, no one raised their hands. No one was flustered by his words.

‘My intuition say they'll be attacking soon. Their timing is impeccable.’

As Hyrkan looked at them, he forcefully stopped himself from smiling. He maintained a neutral expression as he continued to speak.

“There's a video over there explaining the special characteristics of the my Skills. The description of the Skill I'm about to use will be uploaded there soon.”

‘The countdown has started’

At the same time, Hyrkan started to count inside. He started to countdown from the initial number he chose.



“It’s a Skill that was reinforced by the Ancient Power I recently gained. It was a Legendary Rank Ancient power, and I used it to reinforce the Bone Explosive Skill. I don’t think you guys have a high level Necromancer within your guild, so you probably don’t know about the effects of reinforcing this Skill. Do you guys at least know about the Bone Explosive Skill?”

At that moment, Hyrkan unfurled his arms. Then he took out a small bomb from a pouch attached to his waist. The Bone Explosive looked like a skull, and there was a thumb-length wick attached to it.

“The Bone Explosive skill causes this to explode. Once I reinforced this Skill, it gained the time bomb option. At most, I can set the bomb to explode after 6 hours.”

At that moment, Hyrkan unfurled his hand. He straightened all five fingers.

“Five, four, three.....”

He folded his fingers as he spoke. He started with his thumb, and he kept moving onto the next finger. He finally arrived at the pinky finger.

When it folded, the number zero was spoken by Hyrkan.

Kwah-kwahng, kwahng, kwah-ahng!



It started from beneath the feet of the Strikers surrounding Hyrkan. It occurred from all direction, and it was several dozen.... No, over 200 area started to explode in succession.

“What the hell?”

“It’s an attack!”

The bombs went off like dominoes falling.

In other words, it was quite the sight. It was as if fireworks were being detonated.

The spectators could only look on and focus on the spectacular, powerful and unique attack. Most of those not involved in the explosion looked at the sight.

‘Ok.’

During all of this, Hyrkan ran towards the north.

– Maintain the perimeter!

When the Big Smiles guilds became distracted, Hyrkan immediately broke through the perimeter.



He faced the User that was blocking the path in front of him. The User had been busy looking at the explosions, and when he became aware of the Hahoe Mask, it was too late. The Hahoe Mask was within weapon range.

‘Attack!’

At that moment, the User reacted reflexively. However, this was insufficient to beat an opponent like the Hahoe Mask.

The User needed his comrades to help him, but they wouldn’t reach him in time. It took the Hahoe Mask less than three seconds to dispatch the User.

The User swung his sword like lightning. He brought it down from up high.

Shweek!

Hyrkan looked as if he was attempting a wrestling tackle, and the User’s sword was brought down on Hyrkan’s back.

Kah-ahng!

The sounds of steel hitting steel was heard.

However, that was the only effect it produced. Hyrkan was wearing the Black Spot set, and it was still considered to be the set



with the most defense.

A scar formed on the armor, yet Hyrkan didn't receive any damage.

Hweeek!

Hyrkan grabbed his opponent by the waist, and it was as if he was pulling a tree out of its roots. Hyrkan threw his opponent backwards.

In a flash, a path was formed, and Hyrkan charged through the newly opened path.

“Block him!”

Hyrkan hadn't even bothered to engage the User in a fight. No one expected him to just throw his opponent.

What kind of User would think of such a method, and actually follow through with it?

Of course, there was no plan put in place to deal with such a scenario. One could order people to stop Hyrkan, but it was fruitless.

“I want you guys to run past him, and cordon him off!”



In the end, they could only attempt the same plan as before.

They ran past the Hahoe Mask to form a line, and the line turned into a encircling net again.

The Big Smiles guild's efforts brought them into the Red Desert, but they were already committed to carrying this out.

The stage had changed, but the encircling net surrounded the Hahoe Mask once again.

“I’ll follow you to the depth of hell.”

Someone growled those words at the Hahoe Mask.

As if to answer those words, Hyrkan flicked his finger twice.

It was a signal.

It was like the Anugas raid. He had summoned the Skeletons beforehand, and he had put them in Defensive mode.

Now the Skeletons would come towards the Hahoe Mask. In the process, they would kill anything that was in their way.

– It’s the Skeletons!



– Shit. He summoned and stashed it beforehand!

– Support! Support! It'll be too tough for the Magicians and Priests to block the Skeletons!

The Skeletons encountered the Magicians and Priests first, who were on standby in the rear.

Of course, this was also the proof they needed.

– Attack him!

– The Hahoe Mask is out of cards now!

It was proof that Hyrkan had already taken out most of his cards.

They could now attack with the knowledge that Hyrkan was pretty much defenseless.

Both sides signaled at the same time. The leader of the hunt party sent a signal ordering an attack on the Hahoe Mask.

“Kill!”

Everyone ran towards the Hahoe Mask. A portion of the group stopped to use their Crescent Moon Cut Skill. They sent their sword energy towards Hyrkan.



Several dozen sword energies split the air as it headed towards the Hahoe Mask.

Hahoe Mask didn't try to avoid the sword energies.

‘I'll block it.’

He used the time he would have used to dodge to summon his Golem. He summoning as fast as he was able to, so he summoned a Golem, while not using the Clay Play Skill. Then he started to summon all the Golems he was able to summon.

Poohk!

First, he quickly stabbed a sword in the sands. He used it to initiate his summoning of the Iron Golem. Only the tip of the sword sunk into the sands, and it started to pour out liquid steel.

[You've summoned the Golem.]

The next one to take shape was the Earth Golem.

The Earth Golem rose out of the red sand, and it took form.

[You've summoned the Fire Golem..]



Hwah-roo-roo!

The next one was the Fire Golem. Fire streamed out of Hyrkan's right hand, and the Fire Golem took shape.

[You've summoned the Ice Golem..]

A shard of ice grew for Hyrkan's left hand like a tree. In a flash, it grew larger, and it sprouted limbs. This was the first time the Ice Golem made its appearance in Warlord.

The Iron Golem was the first to be initiated, but it also the slowest to form.

“Bring in the Golem elimination team!”

“Ranged attacks!”

“Get close to them, and try the Armor Breaking!”

“I'm requesting a long ranged bombardment!”

The three Golems had already taken form. The fourth Golem continued to take sword energy strikes and various sword Skills from the Strikers. The Iron Golem formed after taking multiple deep wounds. The Iron Golem appeared in its tough form.



The four Golems were all assembled now.

While this was occurring, Hyrkan started to battle with the four Users, who were approaching him.

He faced the foremost User, who was bring his sword down.

Kah-ahng!

Hyrkan didn't even unsheathe his sword. He raised his left arm to block the descending sword.

Shweek!

The two other Users came at Hyrkan from both sides as they used their swords like spears. They charged to close the distance.

Before they could reach him, Hyrkan grabbed the sword arm of his opponent. Then he used a judo throw.

Kwah-ahng!

“Uh?”

The User was suddenly thrown to the floor, and the User had a dumbfounded expression within his helmet. He had never experienced a judo throw within Warlord, and he also never



experienced falling this easily.

Hyrkan squatted down in place to dodge the attack coming from both sides. The two swords passed above Hyrkan's head as they intersected.

Koo-oohng!

Then the two Users crashed into each other.

“Ooh-ahk!”

“Below! Below!”

The two Users, who crashed into each other, quickly righted themselves. They tried to attack Hyrkan again, but Hyrkan already moved behind one of the Users. After he moved behind the User, Hyrkan grabbed his opponent's waist.

Shoohk!

Hyrkan easily lifted the User, and Hyrkan threw him into the other User.

The User was flying towards his comrade, and the comrade raised both hands to catch him. The comrade fell on his butt as he caught him.



“Uhk!”

“W...what the hell?”

Three Users were defeated in a flash, and they had a dumbfounded expression on their faces. In terms of HP, they hadn't suffered any damage, However, this experience gave them psychological damage instead of the damage to their bodies.

The remaining User decided not to attack the Hahoe Mask.

Instead, he started yelling out.

“Support! Support!”

He had seen the Hahoe Mask's method of fighting, and the User knew he had no chance in defeating the Hahoe Mask by himself.

Unfortunately, the ones to react to the shout for support wasn't his comrades or the support team..

Pooh-hwaht!

These were large snakes with hardened scales that reminded one of bugs.

“It's the Sand Snakes!”



The snakes had reacted to the large amounts of landmines, and the ruckus going on above the surface of the Red Desert.

16.

Pandemonium.

This was the only apt description of this stage.

Koohng koohng!

There were four enormous Golems running amok above the Red Desert. The Golems were full of wounds, and a loud sound emanated every time a damaged part of the Golems fell to the floor. This added more confusion to this already ridiculous battlefield.

Pooh-hwaht!

Six Sand Snakes were moving below and above the sand for their hunt. They were akin to fireworks detonating above an already chaotic situation. They further pushed a chaotic situation into an absolute mess.

There were only six or seven Strikers from the Big Smiles guild, who were able to properly engage the Hahoe mask in battle. The number was very lacking if one wanted to kill the Hahoe Mask.



In such a shit show, the support team was supposed to stabilize the situation, but not a single member of the support team was in sight. They were in a battle against the group of Skeletons.

Of course, deaths started to blossom inside this pandemonium.

[The Skeleton Warrior has reverted to being a Fragment.]

[The Skeleton Knight has reverted to being a Fragment.]

The Skeletons were falling.

“Shit!”

“Recovery Item! Give me some Recovery Items!”

“I’m out!”

“What about the Priests?”

“They are battling the Skeletons.”

The Users died.

[Golem has returned to the earth.]



[Ice Golem is starting to melt.]

The Golems had taken too much damage, and they were starting to fall apart.

“We’ve killed a Sand Snake!”

“There are four Sand Snakes left. Be careful!”

The Sand Snake couldn’t avoid death either in this pandemonium.

Moreover, the Hahoe Mask hadn’t remained unscathed.

The continuous battle ruined his Black Spot set. The parts that were least damaged were dented, and there were even parts where the armor itself had broken off. One could see flesh beneath the armor.

His left arm was especially in a bad state. His armor and glove had fallen off, so his bare arm could be seen. His wristwatch on his left wrist was exposed. It was undefended, since there were no armor over his arm.

The Users facing Hyrkan took this as a source of comfort.

“Look! We just have to cut off his wrist now.”



“Be strong! The Hahoe Mask has run out of quivers!”

They just had to cut off his wristwatch. They’ll gain everything when the Hahoe Mask was caught.

The User in front of their eyes was the most valuable prey in Warlord, and the prey was at death’s door.

This fact made everyone’s eyes gleam.

When their gaze was focused on him, Hyrkan smiled.

“You guys did well, so I’m sorry to have to tell you this. However, my Cool Time has ended.”

Accompanying his words, Hyrkan opened up his forearm.

‘Uh?’

‘What the hell?’

Hyrkan’s left forearm opened like a box, and Hyrkan took out Skeleton Fragments from within.

In truth, he could have summoned additional Skeletons at any point in time. His Cool Time had already ended.



However, he had held himself back.

He had been waiting for this moment.

He wanted his opponents to lose their cool from the surprise they felt, and he wanted to buy several seconds using this tactic.

Hyrkan scattered the Skeleton Fragments to summon a Skeleton Knight and four Skeleton Warriors.

“S...shit!”

Someone let out a sound of despair when he saw the Skeletons.

No one had expected him to hide the Skeleton Fragments inside his forearm, and the Skeleton Fragments were used to summon additional Skeletons.

“Endure! The support team has almost wrapped up their side. We still have over 80 members still alive!”

“We can’t lose the Hahoe mask.”

In the face of despair, some of the Users tried to act wisely.

“It is only a Skeleton Knight and Skeleton Warriors. We just have



to kill them.”

“This is his last card.”

The despair they felt was shallow. Since it was shallow, the sense of despair started to dissipate.

As the Big Smiles guild members looked at the Skeleton Knight and Skeleton Warriors, their expression made it clear that they were anticipating their victory.

Maybe it was because of this fact?

They wanted to survive and taste the victory. This was why they didn't escalate the situation. They waited for the support team, so they could bring about a surefire finale that resulted in their victory.

‘Thank you.’

Hyrkan expressed his thanks inside, then he summoned another of his Skeleton underling.

[You've summoned the Bone Wyvern.]

He summoned his Bone Wyvern.



Hyrkan looked at the Users in front of him. The Skeleton Knight and the Skeleton Warriors were creating a fence, and he immediately got on the Bone Wyvern's body.

Then he spoke.

“Riding Mode.”

[The Riding Skill has been activated.]

“My destination is the Heard Fortress ruin town.”

[Your destination is the Heard Fortress ruin town. Your flight will commence.]

In a flash, the Bone Wyvern started flapping its wings. It was a useless gesture, but nonetheless it started to ascend into the air with the beat of its wings.

“Uh? Uh?”

Everyone looked at this sight with dumbfounded expression on their face. As if to taunt his master's enemies, the Wyvern flew over the battlefield as it flew towards its destination.

“Ooh-ha-ha!”



Hyrkan raised both his hands atop the Wyvern.

‘This day.... I’ve been dreaming of this day.’

The winner was decided.



# Chapter 182 – Golden Conch (1)

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1.

This enormous typhoon couldn't be compared to anything that came before it.

– The Hahoe Mask took down the Big Smiles guild!

It was too big. When the typhoon made its appearance, the first reaction that arose was to confirm the validity of this event.

– What are you talking about? The Hahoe Mask took down the Big Smiles guild?

– Are you talking about a guild war? Didn't that happen at the Frozen Land?

– ┐ However, didn't the most recent clash occur at the Highwood Forest? Isn't the situation within the Highwood Forest completely different from the one that occurred at the Frozen Land?

People were only discussing the validity of this particular news, and all other discussions were swept away by this typhoon.

The V&V guild's Poker team had found a new ruin, and they had caught the Cerberus guarding the ruin. Tobo Soft's next project after Warlord was leaked. The Red Bulls guild had headed west



after crossing the Black Continent. There was a rumor saying the First One turned down an exclusive sponsor contract that would have paid him one million dollars.

However, all these news became past stories in front of the enormous typhoon created by the Hahoe Mask.

Then the truth started to trickle out.

- The Big Smiles formed a hunting team to kill the Hahoe Mask. These Users were all over level 220, and they were the elites of the Big Smiles guild.

- They tried to use the Hahoe Mask's revenge play for the Pitbull against him. They used the Users, who hunted down the Pitbull, as bait.

- The Hahoe Mask bit the bait.

The shape, size and the power of the typhoon was immense!

- The Hahoe Mask won.

Three days had passed since the typhoon had occurred, and a single video was uploaded regarding this incident. The video was uploaded on the Hahoe Mask's youtube page, and it was a free video.



The first scene of the video was the Hahoe Mask's monologue.

– Before I explain my side of the story regarding the affair that had occurred recently, I would like to put out a statement. I forgive the Big Smiles guild. Let us end our feud here. I won't attack or threaten the Big Smiles in regards to this incident.

After his monologue ended, Hahoe Mask's 'Giant Killing' video started. It climbed over a million views after two days.

2.

“This isn't funny.”

“Are you watching it again?”

“I'm telling you. This isn't funny.”

Hyrkan had a sullen expression at Whistling's words. Of course, one couldn't see his expression, because the Hahoe Mask was covering his face.

“If it isn't funny, why do you keep watching it?”

Hyrkan finally expressed how he felt through his own mouth. Instead of answering, Whistling put on a pleased smile as an answer.



“Over there! He’s over there!”

“Wow. My heart is beating faster.”

“Your heartbeat can’t beat faster inside this game.”

“I’m just saying.”

A man and a woman was running full tilt towards the two.

Yojori and Joba was like a freight train. They were charging forward as if they weren’t going to stop, but they stopped on a dime in front of Hyrkan.

When they came to a stop, they started shouting towards Hyrkan.

“I...I saw your video. Giant Killing! It was really incredible!”

“H...how was that possible? I’ve seen it over a hundred times, yet I’m having a hard time believing it.”

“Hundred? Stop lying. If you saw it hundred times, then I saw it 200 times.”

“What? How do you know if I lied or not! I really saw it a hundred times!”



They were making a big fuss.

However, Hyrkan was satisfied by their reaction.

Hyrkan had wanted to elicit the reaction he was seeing from the two of them.

Hyrkan turned to look at Whistling as the two continued their antic.

Hyrkan looked at Whistling as if to say, 'This is the reaction you should be having instead of snorting!'

When Whistling read Hyrkan's countenance and message, he shook his head from side to side before he looked away.

'What an amazing guy.'

Whistling turned his gaze away, and he forced down his exclamation. He shoved it down his throat.

He held it in.

'I never expected him to really win against the Big Smiles guild....'



The Hahoe Mask and the Big Smiles guild had collided. The public decided to copy the Hahoe Mask's title for his video, and the incident was now called the Giant Killing. A week had passed since the incident. However, the people of Warlord was still having a trouble digesting the reality of the incident. This was how shocking this incident was.

Hahoe Mask always took on impossible challenges, and he brought the impossible into reality. This was why people were fanatical about him.

However, this incident was on a whole different dimension compared to anything the Hahoe Mask had pulled off before.

A tectonic shift had occurred.

Accompanying the tectonic shift in a land where the 30 great guilds existed, a 31st power had appeared.

Of course, in the past, the Hahoe Mask and the 30 great guilds....

Their relationship could only be described as an ill-fated relationship. However, Hyrkan had been able to declare a war against the Big Smiles guild, and he had won.

He had achieved victory when he had crossed the Terube castle wall to gain the rights to explore the Northland. He was also the first one to find the Frozen Kingdom.



However, all his previous victories were the result of a spontaneous battles. At the time, the Northland Exploration team of the Big Smiles weren't part of the main force. Killer Sinclair was part of the main force, but he had been ambushed by the Hahoe Mask after fighting a fierce battle with the Second Head Sohank. So this event hadn't been taken seriously.

What about the most recent event?

The Hahoe Mask had gone after the heart of the Big Smiles guild. The Big Smiles guild had gathered most of their elite Users, and they had even set up their own stage. They had used a bait to lure the Hahoe Mask, and they had had put their best foot forward in this attempt.

However, they hadn't been able to catch the Hahoe Mask, and they had suffered a loss to more than half their forces in trying to catch a single User.

Of course, there was a portion of the population that had rejected this narrative.

The Hahoe Mask had run away, so wouldn't the winner be the Big Smiles guild?

However, the answer to that question was quite simple.

If one wanted to know the result of the war, one just have to look at the status of the winner and the loser.



The winner would receive acclamation, and the loser had no words to say in excuse.

The Hahoe Mask's acclamation came in the form of views. The Giant Killing video had already recorded 300 million views. On the other hand, the Big Smiles guild refused to respond or give an official statement regarding the issue. They kept their mouths shut.

It was ridiculous for a third party to discuss as to who was the winner and the loser.

The Hahoe Mask had done something incredible.

How was this possible?

Even after watching the video released by Hyrkan, people were having a hard time believing it.

Moreover, when they started accepting as truth, the next logical question was posed.

‘……so why did this occur?’

The Users slowly started to pose the question.

Why did the Hahoe Mask and the Big Smiles guild go to war?



The aftereffect created by the war with Hyrkan was now being felt by the Big Smiles guild and the other 30 great guilds.

None of the 30 great guilds were able to give an official statement regarding the event. In such an unheard of situation, the mighty 30 great guilds were dismayed.

Whistling didn't think the feeling of dismay would work in Hyrkan's favor. The 30 great guilds would now look at Hyrkan as a competitor.

He wasn't just a loose nail one had to worry about stepping on. He would be viewed as a morningstar that could bludgeon them.

They would try to keep him in check instead of cooperating with him.

Of course, at the same time, the 30 great guilds couldn't rashly attack the Hahoe Mask either.

He was now a peer of the 30 great guilds, and they would have to treat him accordingly.

‘What is he pursuing?’

Hyrkan didn't have to travel this road. This road was very far from guaranteeing wealth and fame.



Whistling knew this better than anyone. The Hahoe Mask had been untroubled when they had parted before. The Hahoe Mask had already set his course. It meant everything up to now had been planned by him, and he had been pursuing this result.

So why did Hyrkan choose to walk on this particular path?

Whistling pushed down the mounting questions.

In the previous exchange, he had snorted towards Hyrkan as he pushed downed his exclamation.

Hyrkan was his friend.

Of course, he could ask questions about Hyrkan's motivations, but it wasn't the time to do so. This was a conversation that should happen over a beer.

For now, he just had to keep his mouth shut, and help his friend in any way he could.

Moreover, this was also the reason why this meeting was scheduled. He was here to help Hyrkan.

"Anyways, I heard you earned the Quest Reward for Elven Kingdom Relic Quest."



“When we received the Seed of the Record Tree from the Den of the Rebels, we immediately exchanged it for the reward. We brought it back with us.”

However, their Quest didn't match up with Hyrkan's Quest.

Hyrkan would have to go to the Red Desert again to meet the Red Elf tribe. If he wanted to do so, he needed the Artifact. It was an Artifact from the Barley Kingdom.

Fortunately, Yojori and Joba had received the Artifact of the Barley Kingdom as a reward for their Quest.

This was why this meeting had been set up. They wanted to help Hyrkan progress in his Quest.

“So you are saying you will travel with me.... Will that be ok?”

At that point, Hyrkan gave up on asking the reason behind their actions.

Unless Hydra guild was dumb, they would have already figured out why Whistling was killed in the Highwood Forest by the Big Smiles guild.

They probably knew Whistling had met with the Hahoe Mask.

If Hyrkan was in the Hydra guild's shoes, he would have given



the order barring any contact with the Hahoe Mask.

He would have asked them to leave the guild if this order wasn't followed.

Of course, Whistling, Yojori and Joba had similar personalities. They could easily choose to leave the guild, yet Hyrkan didn't want them to suffer so much.

"I'm sorry, but we won't be able to travel with you. We are under orders from our guild."

It was as he guessed.

"I'm sorry."

"You don't have to be sorry."

Hyrkan nodded his head as if this was the preferable course of action. Since he had gained a hint for his Quest, he had gained a lot in this venture. If needed, he could follow the line of Quests being progressed by the Whistling Family.

This would naturally allow him to received the Artifact of the Barley Kingdom as a reward.

"As for the Quest information...."



Hyrkan had planned on purchasing the Quest Information from them. He wanted this to be a clean transaction.

“This is why we had a discussion amongst ourselves. This Item is unbound. We’ll just give this to you.”

‘Huh?’

Hyrkan stopped speaking, and before Hyrkan could react in surprise, Joba brought out an Item from a pouch on his waist. It was a lump of gold. He took out a Gold Bar that was as big as his hand.

Hyrkan became surprised at the appearance of the Gold Bar, and he became much more surprised when he heard this Item would be given to him.

“This…….”

“This is the Artifact. If you activate the Item Info Window, it will identify itself as the Artifact of the Barley Kingdom.”

“No, wait a moment. You are just giving this to me?”

Hyrkan rephrased his words as he continued to speak.

“Are you sure you can just give this to me? What about your next Quest? I’m pretty sure you guys need this Item.”



This was a Quest Reward. This was needed to progress into the next Quest.

If they wanted to meet the Red Elf tribe, they would need this Item, yet they were just going to give it to him?

“Anyways, we don’t have the strength needed to go meet the Red Elf tribe.”

“We can go do another Quest. There are many more Elves out there.”

After looking at the two, Hyrkan turned to look at Whistling.

Whistling spoke to Hyrkan.

“Thank you for avenging me.”

Whistling’s words were short. Hyrkan struggled with his thoughts for a moment before he grabbed the Gold Bar.

“All right. If someone messes with you guys again, tell me about it. As I’ve said before, I’m really good at what I do.”

This wasn’t a trade. They had helped him.



Hyrkan accepted it.

3.

After the incident, the Big Smiles guild didn't talk about the incident.

Even the normal guild members of the Big Smiles guild didn't know the details of what had occurred. However, stories started to spread through word of mouth. Moreover, the word of their defeated started to spread too.

“Did we really lose?”

“This makes no sense. There were over 50 Users with an average of level 220, and we even used a bait yet we lost.....”

“Moreover, this happened at the Highwood Forest. That region is ours! I can understand being defeated in the Red Desert, but how could we not kill the Hahoe Mask inside the Highwood Forest? Even if we had caught him immediately, wouldn't we have come out at a loss?”

However, there was no clear evidence that they had lost. Even if the defeat was likely, the Big Smiles guild members started to push back on the idea that they had lost.

“That damn Hahoe Mask bitch ass.”



“How many times do we have to go through this because of that bastard?”

“I’m sure he used some ridiculous trick. That bastard is cheap and cowardly.”

The source of the push back was the hate and anger they felt towards the Hahoe Mask. A loss was a loss, but some decided to use the defeat as fertilizer for an even bigger revenge.

“Who cares if we lost? We should use this opportunity to designate the Hahoe Mask as an enemy, and the whole guild should hunt him down.”

“Yes, we should do this. Let us see who will come out on top. How long will that bastard last after picking a fight with the Big Smiles guild?”

“Even if we have to fight him ten times, we just have to win once. When he loses, his personal hell will start.”

A stumble could determine if one won or lost.

Some guild members clung to this old saying. They were determined to get their revenge.

However, all their will were crushed when the video was



released.

## Giant Killing.

The video was a period placed at the end of a sentence. The will for revenge and the anger they felt towards the Hahoe Mask came to a full stop.

There was no ambiguity to the story anymore.

The Hahoe Mask had won. However, it wasn't as if the Hahoe Mask had asked for money or their territory for his victory. He had taken ownership of the situation. He didn't even ask the Big Smiles for an apology. He had forgiven them.

In such a situation, how could the Big Smiles guild express their hostility towards the Hahoe Mask?

They could do it.

However, the public and even the fans of the Big Smiles guild wouldn't support their vendetta against the Hahoe Mask.

“This is it.”

For the second time, the meeting of the officers occurred. When Sinclair heard about it, he couldn't help, but sneer in disdain. He shook his head from side to side.



This time he was invited to participate in the meeting of the officers, but Sinclair had turned it down.

‘This has come to a complete end.’

They only looked for him when they needed him. There was no reason why he should move when they clapped. Sinclair just waited for the summary report that’ll come out after the meeting of the officers. Sinclair played the Hahoe Mask’s video again.

‘This war.... It feels as if the Hahoe Mask had been preparing for it for a long time. If not, how could he deal with the aftermath so cleanly.....’

The Hahoe Mask’s strategy in the battle was surprising, but the more surprising part was how he navigated through consequences of the battle.

The war had started out as a petty revenge plot, yet after becoming victorious, he brought everything to a full stop by forgiving his opponents. In reality, wars within games didn’t end so cleanly. It was a messy affair, so this was a rare occasion.

Revenge begets revenge. The war usually continued in a vicious cycle of violence.

Moreover, no one had ever gone up against the mighty power of the 30 great guilds like the Hahoe Mask. One couldn’t even find an



analogous incident in other games. There were no reference cases. This was a first.

Even though this was a first, the Hahoe Mask was able to bring about this result.

‘I’m really curious about his identity.’

Sinclair received a call.

– Sinclair.

“Horus.”

– What a fucking mess.

Horus was the one contacting him. Horus was Sinclair’s comrade, who had agreed with his plan to bring the Hands guild out from the shadow into the sun. Currently, Horus did not represent the Hands guild. He was operating under the Sweepers guild.

It wasn’t as prestigious as being in the Poker team, but Horus was achieving victory after victory. Sinclair didn’t feel too good about it.

“Did you call me to make fun of me?”



– No way. It was your plan for us to come out from the background. If you fail, then I fail. Why would I make fun of your failure? We are basically tied at the hips.

“Then are you planning on helping me out?”

– I’m sorry, but I don’t know how I’ll be able to help you. Just think of it as you unwittingly stepping on shit. Fortunately, you didn’t participate in this disaster, so the damage was somewhat blunted. At the very least, you saved your face.

He had saved his face.

Sinclair nodded his head at those words. The atmosphere around the Big Smiles guild was a mess, but in the end, the only positive news was the fact that Sinclair hadn’t participated in the Hahoe Mask hunt.

Some were saying that Sinclair had opposed to hunting down the Hahoe Mask. Some in the guild built upon this narrative, and they said Sinclair had wanted a fair fight with the Hahoe Mask. This was the rumor being spread.

‘I was right in not dipping my toe into this water.’

This was also the reason why he was the Big Smiles’ only hope. If the Killer was able to win against the Hahoe Mask in a 1 on 1 battle, all the humiliation and the losses they suffered could be settled.



If they didn't have this sense of expectation, the Big Smiles guild would have suffered losses several magnitude larger.

– It is quite funny. You have basically taken over the Big Smiles guild through this. In truth, I'm not sure if I should be consoling your right now. In the end, this is your gain.

“You can look at it that way. Still, this doesn't feel great.”

This sense of expectation was why Sinclair's position was impregnable now. In the end, this incident had to be owned by the guild master and the sub-guild masters, who had signed off on it.

Even if he wasn't in a top management position, his voice would be loudest within the guild.

“Still, what is the point of becoming an owner of a tiger with no teeth and claws?”

– Still, it is much better than taking care of the tiger from the shadow.

Better?

After speaking those words, Sinclair thought on it for a moment.

He compared the time he spent in the Hands guild as a Helper, and the period of time he operated as the Killer.



Which period of time did he prefer?

Was his current situation better for him?

Of course, he preferred the latter time period. The amount of money he was making wasn't too different, yet his brand recognition had changed drastically. When he was a Helper, no one even knew his name was Sinclair. Now he was one of the skilled Users, who represented Warlord.

‘Mmmm.’

At that moment, Sinclair was torn. It was an obvious question with an obvious answer to it, yet he had to think about it.

It basically meant that the answer wasn't obvious anymore.

“...yes. The current situation is preferable.”

– Let's end the idle chatter here. In truth, our biggest problem isn't the Hahoe Mask.

Horus changed the topic.

– The Stormhunters guild is progressing through the game too fast. They are moving faster than the Hahoe Mask.



Sinclair nodded his head. Hahoe Mask was very fast in progressing through the game, but the the fastest one was the Stormhunters guild. They had focused their entire guild's resources in progressing through the Quest, and the Hahoe Mask had wasted several days fighting the Big Smiles guild. The Stormhunters guild had used that time to significantly progress in their goal to head towards the end of the game.

– Also... It is only a rumor, but I've heard that the Stormhunters guild and the Red Bulls guild might form an alliance.

Horus' rumor made Sinclair tense. He shifted his position.

“Those two guilds?”

– Those two guilds also know a good deal about the Warlord's System. If the game is coming to an end, they want to be the first and last conqueror of Warlord. This had always been their goal from the start.

“What about our upper management?”

-The Five Star Project will have to be implemented in earnest.

Five Star Project.

At those words, Sinclair gritted his teeth.



– If we aren't careful..... It'll be war. This won't be like this small war between a User and a guild. This will be Guilds vs Guilds. It'll be a Guild War.



## Chapter 183 – Golden Conch (2)

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4.

The Highwood Forest was quiet. This place used to have battles occurring for twenty-four hours seven days a week. However, it was different now. The Wood Devils were standing still as if they were statues, because they couldn't find any enemies. They stood patiently like old trees as they waited for a battle.

A User wearing a hood was running through this tranquil stage. The User moved at high speeds to avoid the monsters. The User wearing the hood skillfully avoided moving within the Wood Devil's awareness range and aggro range. He was blazing through the Highwood Forest at high speeds.

In a flash, the User escaped the confines of the Highwood forest to arrive at a landscape filled with red sand. When he stepped onto the Red Desert, he immediately modified the wristwatch.

“Slot on.”

After the short command word, imposing pieces of spotted metal started to encase the hooded User like snakes. It started with the helm. Then it moved to the chest and limbs. In the end, the gleaming armor took form on the User, and he pushed up his face guard. His face was uncovered. One could see the sight of the Hahoe Mask.

Hahoe Mask Hyrkan.



Currently, Warlord was gripped with shock, fear and fanaticism. The one to put Warlord in such a state returned to the eye of the storm. He appeared at the place where the earthquake originated.

“Uh-whew.”

After catching his breath for a short moment, Hyrkan turned his head to look at the Highwood Forest. He had participated in an incredible battle here. The war waged here so intense, and the implications were immense. Even now he could bring up the memories of the battle at will. The memories and the feelings he had felt in the war was clear inside his mind.

‘I did it.’

Of course, at the end, he had mounted the Bone Wyvern, and he had yelled out his destination. The Bone Wyvern split the winds and they had flown past the Highwood Forest. The feeling he felt from the air was also clear inside his mind. As he vividly recalled the sensation he felt, Hyrkan’s body felt an electric charge run up his body.

Whether it was before he had returned to the past or after he had returned to the past, he had always wanted to accomplish this task, and he had done it.

He ruthlessly stomped and crushed a 30 great guild. Now he didn’t have to run away. He was able to hold his head up high with pride and aloofness. He was able to look down on their heads,



and he could dictate their response.

‘Yes. This is me. This is the person I am within Warlord.’

He had wanted to show them all. Hyrkan wasn’t someone they could step on.

Before he returned to the past, he had been crushed before he could even struggle. It had been a one-sided affair, but this didn’t mean he was inferior to them. Hyrkan had suffered not because he had been pitifully weak.

He wanted to improve himself to prove a point.

‘....if I hadn’t been betrayed, I would have seen this sight before I returned to the past.’

This was a sight that could only be seen after stepping over people.

He had really wanted to see it, and he had been sure he would be able to see it.

He had thought he would be able to step above the 30 great guilds if he stayed together with the Hahoe Mask guild. He had been able to see a sight that he always wanted to see with the Hahoe Mask guild.



Now he had elevated by stepping on the great guilds by himself, and he could admire the scenery.

He was still short in achieving his dream, but he was in the process of bringing it to bear.

Hyrkan turned his head to look at the endless Red Desert.

This was only the bottom of the scenery he wanted to see.

Hyrkan walked towards his vision.

5.

[Your Level has increased.]

When he heard the Level Up announcement, Hyrkan slid down the Sand Snake's body as if he was on a slide.

Then he turned his head to look at the status of the Sand Snake.

The Sand Snakes were called the assassins of the Red Desert. However, it was in such a pitiful state that it felt shameful to attach such a notorious nickname to the Sand Snake.

A Sand Snake was tangled up with the body of another Sand Snake. It was a sight akin to thick ropes tangled in a mess.



The Ingredient Gem of a Sand Snake had a very low drop rate, yet Hyrkan had used the Clay Play skill to create a Sand Snake Earth Golem. This was the first time he had tried this strategy, and it was very effective.

‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Should that be the title of my next video?’

Hyrkan looked at the wretched sight of the monster, and he had a satisfied expression on his face. His plan had panned out, so he felt satisfied.

Of course, this wasn’t a cheap plan either.

The Sand Snake’s Ingredient Gem was currently being traded for a very high price. Moreover, this result couldn’t be achieved with a normal Golem. A Golem had to be reinforced by the Transcendent Rank Ancient Power to replicate this sight.

Currently, the only one able to use this method in Warlord was Hyrkan.

‘This was clean.’

It was a key point.

Hyrkan knew the Big Smiles guild wouldn’t continue to leave



him alone. They'll attack Hyrkan when the opportunity presents itself. No, they'll try to create the opportunity by using all kinds of tricks.

Moreover, this was no longer only about the Big Smiles guild. Most of the 30 great guilds would consider the Hahoe Mask as an enemy.

It had been so in the past, and there was no reason that would lead him to believe that things would change this time around.

However, he didn't plan on avoiding a fight. He'll fight.

As an exchange, it wouldn't be on a stage where it gave them the advantage. Hyrkan will fight them on a stage where he'll have the advantage.

'I have to go deeper.'

He had to move deeper into locations where powerful monsters were populated. He had to be at locations where there were a lot of obstacles and strife.

The 30 great guild's era of prosperity would burst like a bubble. Everything Hyrkan possessed would become effective weapons against them.

The war that had started would end there. It'll end when he reached the deepest location in this game.



Hyrkan raised his head, and he looked at the large forest that looked like a mirage.

‘Let’s see this through to the end.’

He’ll go to the deepest point inside this game. He’ll reach the end of this game, and it’ll be the final stage for his war.

6.

The Elves with red skin was aiming their arrows towards Hyrkan. The arrowheads were frighteningly sharp.

However, Hyrkan was relaxed as he faced the arrowheads, and he folded his arms as he took everything in.

There was a warrior of the Red Elf tribe in front of Hyrkan. The NPC named Hing was looking over the lump of gold. It had red skin and black eyes. It was also wearing an armor made out of ingredients gathered from the Sand Snake. The Red Elf was beautiful, but the sense of alienness was larger than sense of mystery he felt.

‘It would have been great if Whistling’s Family saw this.’

He could imagine what Whistling and his two comrades would say. The man and the woman would talk endlessly. Hyrkan had a



faint smile as he shook his head a little bit.

It seemed he would have to set a date to meet. Them. He would meet everyone over some beer.

If he didn't, he realized he might regret not meeting them.

At Hyrkan's movement, the arrowheads of the Red Elves moved too.

It was a warning signal telling him not to move.

Hyrkan stopped moving.

Then Hing also came to a stop.

Hwee hwee!

Hing whistled a sound that resembled a chirping bird.

Accompanying the whistle, the arrowheads pointing at Hyrkan was lowered towards the ground.

[You've gained the Title 'Guest of the Red Elf Tribe'.]

[You've completed the Quest 'Artifact of the Elves'.]



After he heard the Announcement for acquiring a title, Hyrkan unfurled his arms.

“Where did you get this, human?”

Hing approached Hyrkan, and it asked him the question. Its black eyes glared at Hyrkan, and Hyrkan spoke as he always did. He answered in a friendly manner.

“I acquired it from the Den of the Rebels located inside the Red Desert.”

A User should always be friendly in front of an NPC!

Even as many things changed, this was the golden rule that must be kept by Users of Warlord.

“How did you get in there?”

“An enormous snake created a path, and I followed it.”

“The Mirage Snake is still alive.....”

As Hing spoke, it looked over Hyrkan once again. Hyrkan didn't avoid its gaze.



Hyrkan also made observations about Hing.

‘From what I know, the Red Elves didn’t come out even when Warlord was pretty far down the road.....’

He had never heard about the Red Elves before.

This was the same for the large snake named Mirage Snake. He hadn’t known about the existence of such a large monster. Moreover, he couldn’t have have even imagined such a storyline.

However, he could guess at what was going on by looking at these events.

‘Hmmm.’

A piece of a puzzle became clear inside Hyrkan’s head. The puzzle was close to being completed, so Hyrkan had a pleased expression on his face.

‘I’ll take you to our chief now. Please don’t think about doing anything foolish.’

Hyrkan’s expression turned neutral when he received Hing’s threatening words.

It happened at that moment.



“As expected, it’s you.”

A short dwarf slowly appeared from between the group of Elves.

When it made its appearance, the Elves parted to let it through.

“We meet again.”

Blacksmith Olf.

[You’ve completed the ‘Artifact of the Ancient King’ Quest.]

Hyrkan nodded his head when he saw the NPC he desperately wanted to encounter. He gave a short answer.

“Yes.”

“Your path would have been difficult, and you did well in getting here.”

“I’m trying to save the world. I can’t avoid a task, because it is difficult.”

Instead of answering Hyrkan, Olf looked towards Hing. Olf sent some kind of signal with his eyes. Hing once again let out a whistle.

Before the whistle could come to an end, the Elves started to



retreat.

Olf waved his hand towards Hyrkan.

“Before you meet the chief, I have to talk to you.”

“What would you like to say to me?”

“I’ll tell you about the beings we have been fighting up until now. Moreover, I’ll tell you about the beings we’ll have to fight in the future.”

When he heard those words, the puzzle inside his head was completed.

7.

“This occurred in the distant past.... There was a time when every living creature walked on the ground. It was a brilliant era. However, when this brilliance turned into arrogance, he appeared.”

“Who was it?”

“A Dragon. You can think of him as them or him. You can even think of him as multiple beings.”



“What did the Dragon do?”

“Judgement. He showed, who was the owner of this land. He gave judgement to the arrogant beings, who considered these lands to be theirs.”

“When you refer to it as a judgement....”

“In the beginning, he used the Power of Corruption. It didn’t matter if one traversed this land by ground or air, he corrupted them all. Then he started a war with the beings, who insisted on being the owners of this land.”

“Ah. That’s the power used by the Immoral Prince....”

“Bayan Dean Un..... No, I guess I should call him the Immoral Prince. That’s right. His power was the same as the power from before. The Immoral Prince found the Power of Corruption, and he started researching ways to use this power. That was.... It was the same for the owners of the Ruined Kingdoms. They fought against the Power of Corruption. They used the power within the Power of Corruption. They used a power called the Ancient Power. They knew it was inevitable. They knew the judgement of the Dragon would arrive some day. They knew it, because it happened before in the distant past.”

“So what happened next? ”

“The Dragon raged. This was why he used his five Powers to



curse the world. The north was cursed with Frost. The Urugal mountain range, which bisected the world, was cursed with Fire. The south.....”

“It all fell. I saw what happened. I saw the result.”

“Yes, the prosperous regions fell to the Curses. The Kingdoms of that time became ruins. However, not every Kingdom fell. While the Dragon was using its power to spread the Curses, an Ancient King, who was referred to as the War King, took up a shield and spear capable of defeating the Dragon. He confronted the Dragon. This king had used the world as bait, so the Dragon would turn his five Powers into Curses. He waited for the only opportunity he would be able to defeat the Dragon.”

“Did he kill the Dragon?”

“As the battle came to a close, the Dragon ran away. It had received a large wound, but it would be able to show itself once again in the future. However, all the Kingdom had already fallen by the five Powers of the Dragon. The world was already in ruins. The Dragon’s Army and the Corrupt Army was still destroying the world. The Barbarian King was carrying out the Dragon’s Judgement as proxy. He is now in a stasis. He could carry out his duty when needed. In front of such opposition, no new kingdoms could be built. This was why the rebels went underground as they prepared for the counterattack. Then they started leaving hints all over the world about this fact. They planted flags that’ll be held up by the rebels in the future.”

“So it is possible to counterattack now?”



“The method had already been revealed before. You need Powers that’ll counteract the Dragon’s five Powers. You also need the War King’s shield and spear.”

“The five Powers?”

“The four Powers has already been acquired. The only one left is the Power of Judgement. You have to acquire the Power of Storm from the Barbarian King. The Barbarian King is sleeping right now. He could wake up at any time. A small stimulus could awaken him from his sleep. This is why the Arch Mage’s barrier was placed over the sleeping place of the Barbarian King. This was to make sure the Barbarian King couldn’t be awoken easily.”

“So we just have to kill the Barbarian King.”

“...it isn’t as easy as it sounds. The Barbarian King carries out the Dragon’s Judgement. He controls the Power of Storm. He also keeps numerous number of monsters to act as his hands and feet. If you rashly awaken this being, you might mistakenly turned the world into ruins again.”

“However, we can’t always avoid this. We can’t wait for the Dragon to heal from its injury. We have to kill it before that happens. Isn’t that the right answer?”

“.....can you actually defeat the Barbarian King?”



Hatch, who had been listening to the story, spoke in a confident manner.

“We are the Storm Hunters. I don’t know about anything else, but we can control the Power of Storm.”

“Mmmm.”

Ahimbree thought over Hatch’s answer. After a brief moment, it brought out a Golden Conch.

“This is the key that will show you where the artifact of the War King is hidden. This will be enough to waken the Barbarian King from its sleep. You don’t even have to dispel the barrier. You just have to move close to it, and the Barbarian King will break through the barrier. My teacher Bokan had created this barrier. It was meant to keep people out. It wasn’t meant to cage the Barbarian King. I’m afraid my teacher would be furious if he heard my words right now.”

“Please do not worry. I guarantee we’ll defeat the Barbarian King.”

“It might not be possible with only your forces. You should request help from the Hiban Kingdom. Their elite knights are called the Order of the Steel Lion. They’ll open up the path for you. When they arrive here, you can go with them.”

“Understood, teacher.”



After his conversation, Hatch grasped the Golden Conch. He had an odd expression on his face.



# Chapter 184 – Barbarian King (1)

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1.

“Uh?”

‘What the hell is that?’

The very first User to see the sign was a User named Able.

He had just reached level 200. After finishing his 2nd Advancement, he wanted to celebrate by heading across the Urugal mountain range to reach the Black Continent. However, the Voodook’s Tunnel had a long line of Users in front of it. He clicked his tongue as he took in the sight, and he eventually descended the Urugal mountain range.

When he was doing so, he saw a group piercing through the thick fog to head towards the top of the Urugal mountain range.

‘What is that?’

It was a very weird looking group. They were all wearing crudely designed helmets that looked similar to a lion’s mane.

In truth, Warlord allowed Users to customize their equipment. The Users could create ridiculous designs for armors if they were satisfied with the result. The game allowed Users to craft and wear



almost any design.

However, these beings were riding large lions, and such Users assuredly didn't exist in Warlord. Moreover, there were more than one of them. The fact that there were 30 of them pretty much confirmed that they weren't a group of Users.

When Able's thought process reached this conclusion, his expression changed.

‘Did I just stumble upon a jackpot?’

Able started recording the sight. He chased after the knights climbing up the Urugal mountain range using the lions as mounts.

However, they were too fast. The lions were running up steep inclines as if they were running across a flatland.

Able was confident in his skills to climb a mountain, but the very idea that he would be able to catch up to them was absurd.

In the end, Able lost sight of them. He came to a stop.

Shit!

A bitter sound came out his mouth.



However, at that moment, Able realized something.

‘Huh?’

He had crossed the Urugal mountain using a different road. He hadn’t used the Voodook’s Tunnel.

He had just found a new road leading into the Black Continent.

At that moment, Able had found the Iron Lion Road, and it was the start of a new event.

2.

“This is crazy.”

Ahn-jaehyun put the grape candy into the capsule coffee in an annoyed manner. Ahn-jaehyun was reading the torrent of information and breaking news coming out in regards to Warlord. He had a very annoyed expression on his face.

‘What kind of a game doesn’t allow the Users to catch their breaths like this?’

He finally brought the coffee to his mouth, and his glasses fogged up.



Ahn-jaehyun kept drinking the coffee, and he looked at the Tablet PC's screen when the fog cleared.

[Barbarian King Event has started!]

[The Stormhunter guild will prove once again that they are the best guild!]

[Iron Lion Road! Everyone is heading towards the Black Continent!]

The Stormhunters guild had triggered the Barbarian King Event.

‘Anyways, a middle boss has made its appearance.’

He had heard about the Barbarian King through the Blacksmith Olf.

This information matched up with the prior knowledge he had. Of course, Ahn-jaehyun was well aware of the worth represented by the Barbarian King in the Main Scenario Quest.

It was similar to the Great Battle in the Immoral Prince episode. The Immoral Prince episode had led to the Argardo Raid. It was a similar concept. After killing the Barbarian King, it would lead to the acquisition Quest for the War King's relics. Then one would have to fight the five Powers of the Dragon. Afterwards, the only thing left was the final battle.



However, Ahn-jaehyun wasn't worried about that.

‘The Stormhunters are faster than me.’

Currently, Ahn-jaehyun had received two things from the Blacksmith Olf.

The Gold Bar he had acquired was melted by the Blacksmith Olf, and it created a hybrid Item. It was a cross between a Golden Conch and a Dragon's Horn. It was the Dragon Horn Conch.

‘I'm not doing so well with the Golden Conch Quests right now....’

He had two threads of evidence he could follow, but he wasn't able to fully take advantage of them.

The problem was the level restriction.

One needed to be level 250 to be able to progress in the War King's Artifact Quest.

In the case of the Dragon Horn Conch, it was impossible to progress in the Quest right now.

This was the reason why the Hahoe Mask was burning money as he continued to hunt.



While he was still hunting, the Stormhunters guild had triggered the Barbarian King Event. It basically meant that they were couple steps in front of the Hahoe Mask.

‘Those monsters...’

The surprising part was that they deserved to be called monsters. Ahn-jaehyun had no choice, but to acknowledge this fact.

The Stormhunters guild was putting their guild’s full capacity and ability to breaking through to the east. In the process, they had suffered considerably. Their progress had to be kept secret, so they couldn’t broadcast their achievements. Moreover, the skilled Users, who represented the guild, were all devoted to progressing in the Main Scenario Quest.

The biggest money earner on a live channel were the Raid footages. This meant their profit took a deep dive.

In truth, after the Stormhunters arrived at the Black Continent, the Stormhunters guild’s live chanel was the least profitable channel amongst the 30 great guilds.

A guild with such clout had decided to invest in the Main Scenario Quest, and the result matched their efforts.

‘Yes, it was like this during that time. They were always monsters. Che-sulyun was the monster queen.’



He still detested the Stormhunters guild. His hate had eroded away significantly compared to the time when Kim-dongsoo betrayed him with the Stormhunters guild. Still, he didn't like the Stormhunters guild.

This didn't mean Ahn-jaehyun would disparage the skill level of the Stormhunters guild. If he wanted to crush them, he had to be cold in how he assessed them. He had to be cold. He had to leave behind his personal feelings and private affairs. When he looked at the Stormhunters with an objective eye, they were an awesome guild.

They were playing this game properly.

While the other guilds were focusing on personal gains, profits and popularity, they were focused on the game itself.

'This damned ill-fated relationship. Damn it to hell.'

Ahn-jaehyun sipped his coffee. As he sipped his coffee, he spoke towards his own pride.

'You are an expensive bastard.'

Ahn-jaehyun complained about it.

He complained about it, but he didn't regret his actions.



‘Which position shall I take? What’s my best option?’

Ahn-jaehyun continued to coldly assess the situation.

‘Since the Barbarian King has made its appearance, the Black Continent will become a mess.’

Since the Barbarian King Event had already been triggered, the Barbarian King would start to run amok across the Black Continent.

‘This is an impossible task.’

Obviously, the regular Users and the Underfoot guilds wouldn’t be able to take down the Barbarian King. In the first place, the game’s pace was overclocked. There was no way the normal Users would be able to follow the pace of the high rank Users. How would they be able to face a monster that would be troublesome for these high rank Users?

‘The problem isn’t when they’ll beat it. There is a good chance that they’ll get pushed back.’

If the 30 great guilds as a whole didn’t control this event, the Black Continent will be lost.

In reality, there was only a single checkpoint inside the Black



Continent. It was the Heard Fortress ruin town.

What would happen if the Heard Fortress ruin town was overrun?

The Iron Lion Road was discovered, but it'll become very troublesome to cross the Urugal mountain range after every death.

‘From the Main Scenario Quest Info, this Barbarian King has the Power of Storm at its disposal.’

The Power of Storm was an additional feature.

From Ahn-jaehyun's memories, the Barbarian King had been a terrifying monster even without the Power of Storm.

What would happen if this monster was now capable of using the Power of Storm?

In truth, Ahn-jaehyun couldn't even imagine a clear method that could be used against the Barbarian King.

If he couldn't imagine it, how could any other User in Warlord come up with one?

There was no way they'll be able to come up with one.



‘Is this the season 2 of the Great Battle?’

In the end, the ones holding the key was the 30 great guild.

It was akin to the time during the great battle. They held the fate of the Black Continent, and there was a chance that the Black Continent could revert back to its previous state. The level 220 and up hunting grounds were all located within the Black Continent. If the Black Continent became a region inaccessible by Users, the Level Up pace would drop significantly.

Of course, Hahoe Mask would be able to hunt there. It would be more arduous, but it was possible for him.

‘Hmmm.’

This was why his course of action was clear this time around.

‘The answer is to not even attempt this.’

He’ll sit this one out.

First, the 30 great guilds held the key to this event. If the Hahoe Mask participated in the event, the Big Smiles guild and others wouldn’t look kindly at his actions. Their eyes would focus on him. They’ll make a big fuss about catching the Hahoe Mask.

Moreover, even if the Barbarian King took down the entirety of



the Black Continent, the Hahoe Mask could still hunt in any location he wanted.

He was an independent. Hahoe Mask could travel anywhere, and he could solo anything. He had matured as a Necromancer, and it gave him the power to solo. He was an All-Strength Necromancer.

If the Black Continent turned into being the true Black Continent, Hahoe Mask's competitors would be weeded out through natural selection. This would be the best case scenario for him.

Moreover, the cream of the Barbarian King Event was the Barbarian King. He could just show up when the Barbarian King Raid started. He could just show up to eat the kernel by bypassing the outer shell.

The most logical choice he could make was to not attend this event. He could weigh the advantages and disadvantages several hundred to several thousand times. However, this course of action always came out as being the most profitable. It wasn't close.

There was only one factor that interfered with him taking the wise choice.

'I have to take a backseat in such a large event.... This doesn't feel too great.'

He didn't like the choice he would have to make.



‘If the Hahoe Mask did something the 30 great guilds couldn’t do... It would make for a killer narrative.

As he had these thoughts, Ahn-jaehyun drank his coffee. He once again spoke towards his pride.

‘You are a really expensive bastard.’

3.

“Please call me Horus.”

“You can call me Hatch.”

Horus and Hatch.

They only knew each other by name. They both raised their hand, and they naturally shook each other’s hand. They pumped their hands twice, but after the handshake ended, they continued to clasp hands.

Hatch had relaxed his hand, but Horus continued to grip Hatch’s hand tightly.

Hatch patiently looked at Horus. Horus smiled as he spoke to Hatch.



“I’m speaking to you assuming that you already know what’s going on. Of course, our conversation today is off the record.”

“If I planned to publicize this, it would have already been done. If I had any plans of running my mouth, I wouldn’t have shown up here.”

“Thank you.”

Horus finally let go of Hatch’s hand. Hatch lightly moved his hand, which had participated in the handshake. He checked if his hand was damaged.

“I’ve heard about you. You are someone like a father to Warlord.”

The words were just put out there, and Hatch answered in a calm manner.

“If that is true, there are about 100 fathers and 100 mothers. I don’t think it is prudent to call me the father. I only designed what is considered to be akin to the pinky nail of Warlord.”

“Then you know the worth of Warlord. Of course, you know about it.”

“When the Main Scenario Quest lifespan is extended by a year,



Tobi Gwynn's personal wealth increases by 16%. I'm well aware of the fact that Tobot Soft's stock also increases by 23%."

Hatch finally lost interest in inspecting his hand. He looked at Horus.

"I know the next project needs about 2 years to complete. I know you guys have a contract with the Tobot Soft, and the contract will give you stock options. However, there was a condition that had to be fulfilled before you can exercise your stock option."

Horus nodded his head instead of answering Hatch. It was hard to tell if he was agreeing or disagreeing with Hatch. It was hard to decipher the meaning behind the gesture.

Horus stopped nodding his head, and he changed the topic of the conversation.

"It seems you know about everything. All right. Let's talk. We want to extend the shelf life of this game."

"Wouldn't the shelf life of Warlord be fine as long as Tobot Soft doesn't pull its service? When the Main Scenario Quest ends, it'll turn into normal mode. From that point, the game developers can work on the game. Wouldn't that be preferable? They could set up events that they couldn't set up before."

"Do you really think that is true?"



“I guess if such a thing happens, there are other new games with great reviews that one could try. There is a recently released game called Play the World.... I looked at it once, and I thought it was pretty well made.”

“That game has a bad naming sense.”

“This game is named Warlord, so a name like that could be forgiven. Moreover, that game doesn’t have monsters like the Hahoe Mask playing it.”

Horus shut his mouth at the talk of the Hahoe Mask. One could see his brows slightly furrow.

Unlike before, Hatch could read his emotions through his expression.

That damned Hahoe Mask bastard!

Hatch understood what Horus’ expression was saying.

If it wasn’t for the Hahoe Mask, Horus wouldn’t have to be a tool for the Tobot Soft. He wouldn’t have to do perform such ridiculous tasks. He would have been able to live out his life in comfort. He would have had so much money that he wouldn’t have been able to spend it in his lifetime.

On top of that, Tobo Soft’s next project would have received the popularity of Warlord. The next project would have achieved a



bigger success than Warlord. For helping out Tobot Soft, the Hands guild members would have also received complete support in their next game.

However, all of this fell into pieces when a single User named the Hahoe Mask appeared out of nowhere.

If Hatch was in Horus' shoes, he would have use every method and tricks to eliminate the Hahoe Mask.

This was also one of the reason why Horus had come out to meet Hatch. Currently, Horus and Tobo Soft decided to use every methods and tricks available to them.

“I’m sure it’s frustrating. If you could intervene in the game, you could immediately limit his effectiveness. However, you can only intervene if the Main Scenario Quest is done.... However, who could have have predicted this? This was a game made to test the performance of the M.I. When the game gained investors, they pushed for the game to be released. This was why it was packaged roughly before it was put out as a product. No one expected this level of success.

Thanks to this success, Tobo Soft's market value rose to almost rival to Peach company. Of course, this was possible because of a stock bubble.”

“Let us form a common front. In this Barbarian King Event, let us leave the Barbarian King alone to run amok across the Black Continent. It will be a similar situation as the great battle. The 30



great guilds will announce our plan to not participate in this event. I'm sure your side wouldn't gain much if Warlord ended too quickly. I heard you aren't making much profit through the live channel."

"You want the 30 great guilds to collude with each other?"

"Let me be clear about this. If you don't form a common front with us, you'll have to be prepared for a guild war. A significant amount of money is flowing within this game. Warlord isn't a simple game. The people are enjoying Warlord, because it is an unknown world being created by the A.I. When the unknown world turns into a man-made content, the appeal for this game would disappear."

At Horus' words, Hatch's mouth twitched. It seemed he wanted to express an emotion, yet he was holding himself back.

"What about the Hahoe Mask?"

"If we can't control him, then we'll have to crush him. It would be great if someone from the 30 great guild took control of the Hahoe Mask. If he participates in the Barbarian King Event, we'll send out a special force to thwart him. We'll keep killing him until he quits this game. Unless Hahoe Mask is an idiot, he won't try to get in our way."

Hatch raised his hand. Horus closed his mouth when he saw the raised hand.



“All right. Let’s work together.”

Horus smiled as he nodded his head.

“You made the wise choice. Also, I heard you guys are working with the Red Bulls guild. Is it true?”

“It is a strategic alliance.”

“So the Red Bulls will have the same views as the Stormhunters.”

Hatch gave a bright smile, and he laughed with his eyes. He hadn’t given an answer, but his expression gave a clear answer.

“Anyways, our meeting and the matters we discussed never happened. This is off the record. Since we’ve made an agreement, let us not keep any records.”

At Hatch’s words, Horus quickly replied.

“Of course.”

“Let us use a classic method to contact each other. Any message should be passed between Users. Since our goal is not to achieve a goal, so I guess our goal is to do nothing.”

After finishing his words, Hatch pushed his hand forward.



Horus once again grasped his hand.

After several hours had passed, breaking news started to pop up.

[Sixteen guilds have announced their non-participation in the Barbarian King event. They'll leave the event for the normal Users!]

[The Non-participation announcement includes the Five Star and the Big Three. This will start a trend within the 30 great guilds.]

[Barbarian King event. Who will become the second Hahoe Mask?]



## Chapter 185 – Barbarian King (2)

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4.

“I’m sorry. We can’t abandon the forest. We can’t run away.”

The voice was light, and it was filled with sorrow. Still, the voice was very beautiful, and it tickled one’s ears. A man, who looked like a fighting dog, silently looked at the character, who spoke. He gritted his teeth.

“Whistling hyung-nim! It is almost right in front of our noses!”

“Whistling oppa! It would be best if we leave right now!”

A man and a woman yelled to the rough looking man from afar.

Yojori and Joba were comrades of Whistling, but they had also become his dongsaengs. However, he didn’t answer them.

He looked at a pointy eared elf with pink short hair. She had on a hairpin made out of cherry blossoms clipped to her hair.

“Please go.”

The Elf let out a bright smile towards Whistling, and she lightly put her hands on his chest.



“We won’t forget the effort you exerted for us. We’ll even imprint your story in the Record Fruit. When the Record Seed sprouts and grows, it will remember you. It’ll will be seen by our descendents.”

The Elf, who had put her hand on Whistling’s chest, turned, and she started to run towards an unknown destination. It wasn’t just a single Elf. Numerous Elves, who looked similar to a pink colored buds of a cherry blossom, was running through the forest.

[You have acquired the title ‘The Great Benefactor of the Elves’.]

[You have acquired the title ‘One who received the Blessing of the Elves’.]

[The effect of the title, ‘One who received the Blessing of the Elves’, will allow your movement speed to increase by 10% at locations where trees are present.]

Even during such a ruckus, Whistling heard the System Announcement regarding the acquisition of his Titles.

The Announcement would have given goosebumps to most Users. This might be one of handful of Titles coveted the most in terms of worth. The eyes of most Users would have flipped around from jealousy. It was a valuable Title.

However, the value of the Title didn’t register in Whistling’s ears



or eyes.

‘Shit.’

They were at a half-moon shaped lake located in the southeast region of the Black Continent. It was called the Ohokal.

The lake was a stage with a forest filled with cherry blossom trees next to it. The region was always fragrant, and it always gave off a fresh feeling.

The Simia tribe was an Elven tribe, who decided to reside in this region. They wore outfits that went very well with their surrounding. The Elves of the Simia tribe always had on accessories that reminded one of a cherry blossom.

On the surface, this region looked very beautiful, but it was crawling with monsters over Level 220.

However, even amongst such difficulties, the Simia tribe protected and maintained their way of life.

However, a being that the Elves wouldn't be able to win against was coming towards their lands.

Barbarian King!

The Stormhunters guild had awakened this monster about a



month ago, and it was roaming around the Black Continent. Every region it passed through turned into hell.

At that moment, the Barbarian King had brought several thousand monsters, and they were getting ready to cross the Ohokal Lake.

However, the Simia tribe decided to fight back against the Barbarian King. They decided to mount a defense for their land by the lake.

They would meet their end here.

“Hyung-nim!”

“Oppa!”

They’ll fall.

At that moment, Whistling didn’t want to make such guarantees, but the Simia tribe wouldn’t be able to defend their land from the Barbarian King. The System called Warlord wouldn’t allow it.

The Warlord’s System would only allow Users to defeat the Barbarian King.

This truth was revealed by the Steel Lion Knights, who crossed the Urugal mountain range. They cut through the wall of Level 240



monsters like butter to reach the Barbarian King, but they were crushed in a horrible manner. The Barbarian King hadn't received even a scratch in the fight, and it gave credence to this truth.

This was a game.

“Shit!”

However, Whistling couldn't accept the excuse that this was merely a game. He wouldn't take this situation lying down.

“Yojori! Joba! You guys get out of here!”

“What?”

“I'll fight here. I'll stop the Barbarian King here.”

After hearing his words, Yojori and Joba had the same expression on their faces. They were dumbfounded.

Whistling wanted to stop the Barbarian King?

There had already been many attempts to pull off such a feat.

Numerous Raid teams were formed for the purpose of killing the Barbarian King. These were raid attempts with a good deal of preparation and forethought behind it.



All of them failed miserably.

The reason why the Barbarian King was coming to this place was the fact that all previous Raid Teams had failed.

Yet he wanted to stop the Barbarian King?

This was an absolutely absurd statement.

“Ok. Let’s do this.”

“The worst that can happen is a Game Over. Let us fight together. Anyways, our Quest is gone, because of the Barbarian King.”

“The act of walking back to the Heard Fortress ruin town will be arduous. Let’s just die and get sent there at once.”

“We can’t turn back now. We have to try something. Absolutely!”

However, Yojori and Joba had already evaluated the situation that’ll unfold soon. Their faces relaxed, and they put on bright expressions.

Whistling gritted his teeth at their words. The two of them were choosing to suffer through a Game Over for him. He was thankful,



and he was sorry.

However, at that moment, Whistling didn't express those two feelings.

“All right. Let us become heroes for once.”

They would show their will. Their will was inelegant and worthless, but they would express their will.

However, there was no way they would become heroes.

5.

[You Level has increased.]

[Bone Dragon Skill Rank has increased to Rank C.]

[Iron Golem Skill Rank has increased to Rank C.]

[Death Knight Skill Rank has increased to Rank B.]

[Skeleton Exhibition Skill Rank has increased to Rank D.]

[You've acquired the Title 'Slaughterer of the Tattoo Scorpions'.]



There were so many consecutive System Announcement that it was almost tiring to hear it.

Each accumulation of these Announcements was good news, but Hyrkan's ears didn't pay attention to the sound.

He raised his head, and he looked at the monster he was stepping on.

His foot was on the Tattoo Scorpion's tail. It was a 7 meters long monster with tattoos all over its body.

Doohk ddoohk!

Big drops of poison was falling from the tip of the Tattoo Scorpion's tail. It was the size of a man's head.

Hyrkan's HP slowly fell as the poison dripped. Hrykan bit down on the red candy inside his mouth.

Accompanying a taste akin to a spicy garlic, his HP started to rise.

Since he had a time for a breather, Hyrkan looked at his defensive set.

It wasn't invincible, but the spotted armor had more defense than any other defensive set in Warlord. However, the Dark Spot set had holes in various locations right now, and the holes were the



size of the stinger on the Tattoo Scorpion's tail.

‘It is time for me to change it.’

Dark Spot set.

He had used it for a very long time, and it was finally time to say goodbye to this Item.

It was a late goodbye. Even if it was a very good Item, it was only a level 180 set, yet it was being used in a level 260 hunting ground. If one expected one to be fine using such an Item here, one would be expecting too much.

This was also the reason why he was killing the Tattoo Scorpions.

‘Well, I'll have to use this opportunity to switch out everything.’

Tattoo Scorpion.

It was a mid-sized Level 260 Monster. When one went deeper into the Red Desert, one would arrive at the Red Wasteland. One could encounter this monster there, and it was the highest Level monster encountered by Users in Warlord as of now. Moreover, it had the best Option amongst Rare Rank Items that could be crafted from normal monsters over Level 240.



The best feature activated when one wore all 5 parts. The effect of the Tattoo Scorpion's Tattoo Pattern was quite good.

When one attacked, it could impose a Poison Status on one's opponent. Moreover, the poison was quite powerful.

Hyrkan decided to use this opportunity to equip all his Skeletons with the Tattoo Scorpion Set.

It had been about a month, since the Barbarian King had appeared, and this was why Hyrkan had stuck to hunting only the Tattoo Scorpions.

Now he was reaping the benefit of staying in this location for a month.

He had reached Level 253.

One could find Hyrkan's name in the Level Rankings now. There was only a 12 level gap between him and the First One.

Moreover, he had gathered a lot of Items. He had obtained enough Items to equip 30 Skeletons with a full set. Thirty sounded small, but each set had five parts. Basically, he had acquired 150 Rare Items. Normal Users wouldn't even be able to imagine the process involved in killing so many Tattoo Scorpions.

This was why Hyrkan was able to earn a profit through the footage. Hyrkan poured his money into this hunt.



He wasn't as rich as the old Rich Lich, but it wasn't an exaggeration to say that Hyrkan was spending as much as him.

Despite this fact, Hyrkan's account was in the surplus. Even as he went nuts in spending his money, there was always money left in Hyrkan's Wallet.

This was the best.

His incredible Level Up pace had him in spitting distance to First One, who was 1st in the rankings. His free-handed investments allowed him to quickly raise the Skill Ranks, and he had acquired Level 250 Rare Items by killing powerful monsters. All of this process was being consumed by voracious viewers. His viewers didn't hesitate to pay for his content. They wanted to see everything he did.

While he was doing all of this, the Black Continent was slowly descending into hell thanks to the efforts of the Barbarian King. All of Hahoe Mask's competitors were being killed under the tyrannical rule of the Barbarian King.

Hahoe Mask was leaving everyone in the dust.

This situation was unbelievably great for him.

When he realized he had returned to the past, he had been really glad that he would be able to play this game again. At the time, he



could have never imagined that he would reach such an optimal situation, yet Hyrkan had climbed to the top.

So why was he feeling this way?

‘.....this is boring.’

A yawn came out of his mouth.

He had achieved the goal he had always pined for. Riches and fame was within his grasp, and it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say he was the best in this game.

However, the recent Tattoo Scorpion Hunt was the most boring period of time he had experienced since he started Warlord.

‘I was never bored when I fought against the Stormhunters guild....’

This was a first.

While Hyrkan played Warlord, the game sometimes made him annoyed and angry. There were many instances where he swore at the game. However, he never thought that the game of Warlord was boring.

Even when he was warring with the Stormhunters guild, he cussed them out in anger. He was sick and tired of them. However,



he never thought the game was boring.

When he killed five to six guild members of the Stormhunters guild, he felt joy. He felt happy when he broke through the tribulation in the style of the Hero Slaughterer. He had enjoyed Warlord in those moments.

Hyrkan turned his head. His surrounding was filled Skeleton Warriors, who had been brilliant in their fight against the Tattoo Scorpions. The Skeleton Warriors were staring back at him. They were waiting for their master to give a new order.

‘Now that I think about it, they fight intelligently even without my training.’

He thought about a fond memory of his. In the beginning, he had ruthlessly pushed the Skeleton Warriors to train them. However, they no longer needed his training. The Skeleton’s Combat AI was a finished product. It was splendid. The repeated training and battles allowed them to become extraordinary warriors. At the very least, they would be able to hold their own weight in any fight.

The Skeletons were better than most Users, and he had 100 Skeletons under his command. In the near future, he’ll also use the Transcendent Ancient Power on the Death Knight when it became Rank A.

Who’ll be able to rival him at that point?



Royal Road!

The road of an emperor could be seen in front of him right now. If he followed this road, he'll surely become the best.

However, Hyrkan wasn't interested in what was waiting at the end of the road.

Hyrkan lowered his head.

It was as if he was trying to avoid the gazes of his Skeleton Warriors.

“.....fuck.”

In the end, a swear word came out of his mouth.

The one to break his dull and boring day was a call from his friend.

6.

– I want to borrow your name, Hahoe Mask.

Whistling had contacted Hyrkan out of nowhere, and the request was quite sudden.



Before Hyrkan could reply to his request, Whistling quickly explained his situation. He sounded desperate as if he was being chased by something.

– You don't have to do anything. I know this is asking a lot from you. I just.... I need your name. Please let me borrow your name.

Hyrkan calmed him down before asking for an explanation. Afterwards, Whistling calmly explained the plan he came up with.

– I'm planning on killing the Barbarian King. However, as you probably know, the 30 great guilds won't participate in the Barbarian King Raid. In the end, the regular Users have to be gathered to form a Raid Team.... I plan on using the Hahoe Mask name to gather the normal Users. If it becomes known that you'll step forward for the Barbarian King raid, many Users will participate.

At the end, he gave his apologies.

– I know this request is a bit much. This is why if the Raid fails.... I'll tell them I made it all up. I'll tell them I sold you out. Still, there might be some backlash towards you.... I'm asking for a favor. I can't leave the Barbarian King alone. Even if this is only a game, I can't just stand by and watch this unfold. I don't want to wait as I pray for the 30 great guilds to move.

Finally, the meat of the conversation started.



“So you want to kill the Barbarian King?”

– The Users are pretty much fed up. They are very unsatisfied with the Barbarian King. If it becomes known that you want to catch the Barbarian King, there are a lot of Users, who would want to help you. No, you don’t have to do anything. I’ll say this again. All I need is....

“What clear method will you use to take down the Barbarian King? You have to destroy the Protection Gem at Phase 1. That wouldn’t be too difficult. However, you don’t have any method at your disposal that will allow you to damage it once it enters the 2nd phase called Storm Judgement Mode.”

– I researched the Main Scenario Quest, and I found a clue. Moreover... The next attempt at the Barbarian King Raid would be the 31st attempt. I plan on using the clue as the basis for the next clear method.

“What is that method?”

– The method is.....

Whistling first told him about the clue he was able to find in the Main Scenario quest. Then he started explaining his clear method.

“Ooh-hahaha.”

As he listened to Whistling’s words, laughter suddenly erupted



from Hyrkan's mouth. The excessive amount of laughter indicated that Hyrkan was delighted. He was having a hard time stopping his laughter.

“Sorry. Ah. I'm really sorry.”

Hyrkan was barely able to suppress his laughter, and he gave his apology.

– Were you in the middle of something? If so, I'll call a bit later....

Whistling couldn't understand why Hyrkan gave an apology. He also couldn't comprehend Hyrkan's laughter.

All he could do was apologize.

Did he perhaps interrupt Hyrkan, when he was doing something very important?

When he had this thought, Whistling wanted to immediately end the call. He was too embarrassed about his own actions. He was trying to use his friend in such a manner.

‘As expected, this suits my constitution.’

Hyrkan unburdened Whistling's heart.



“Yes. The Hahoe Mask should do this. This isn’t something a knock-off Hahoe Mask can do. This is something the real Hahoe Mask should take on.”

The game had been boring. For over a month, he plowed through the game as he yawned. This incident had suddenly made Hyrkan’s heart beat faster.

Hyrkan didn’t want to avoid feeling such a thrill. No, palpitation of his heart was like the sound of an engine that was a must for Hyrkan when he played Warlord.

“You set it up. I’ll go catch that bastard. I’ll kill the Barbarian King.”

As he spoke, Hyrkan stood up. When he started to move, the Skeletons followed Hyrkan with their gazes.

“Ah. I’ll catch the Barbarian King by myself. From what you have told me, it’ll be more troublesome if there are too many Users there.”

– You want to do it alone, Hyrkan? Even if it is you, you won’t be able to solo the Barbarian King...

Hyrkan gave a command to his Skeletons.

“I have to solo it. If not, I won’t be able to eat all the benefits by myself. Of course, I’m not by myself.”



He gave his instructions! His next target was the Barbarian King!

7.

Kooohng!

It was a giant.

It had massive legs that made one think about pillars. Its legs were massive, but its large body made its legs look puny. It was a giant with long and thick arms.

Koohng!

The giant was wearing a golden armor. The armor was very flashy, and the armor was decorated with numerous adornments. The ornaments that stood out the most were the gems of various colors.

There were 31 gems and each of them were bigger than a person's head. They were so bright that they were radiant.

Koohng!

The most striking feature was the head of the giant. It had large fan-like ears like an elephant. It had a long nose and it also possessed ivory tusks. However, the gleam in its eyes wasn't like



that of an elephant.

The sclera of the eye was black, and the pupil was yellow. It looked like the eyes of a dragon. No, it was probably Dragon Eyes.

Koohng!

The 7 meters tall giant wore golden armor. Moreover, it possessed Dragon Eyes and the head of an elephant.

Every step it took caused the ground to shake.

It possessed enormous strength, and it possessed an incredible presence!

Its name was Nesha.

Barbarian King Nesha!

This being had carried out the Dragon's Judgement. It had made ruins of strong and prosperous Kingdoms, who had fought against the Dragon early on.

It possessed the authority of the Dragon, and it was able to command any uncivilized beings, who were barbaric. It was able to command all beings, who lived by following their instincts.



The monsters stepped forward for the sake of building up the king's dignity.

The forest looked endless, but each step taken by the king eliminated the trees.

Shweek, shweek!

The monsters, who possessed sharp tools, were cutting down the trees.

Poo-hwaht!

Those with no weapons pulled the trees and boulders by its roots. A large road formed, and it was wide enough for the Barbarian King to walk on it.

Koohng!

The Barbarian King took the next step only when the path was clear.

This was the regality of a king.

The king was overflowing with majesty, and several hundred Users looked on from afar.



As if they had all agreed to do this, the Users started to sneer as they disparaged the Barbarian King. They started making invidious remarks.

“Bitch. We’ll kill you this time.”

“We now know the clear method for the 2nd Phase. We know it works. We’ll catch you this time around.”

When the invidious remarks ended, the leader in charge of the group spoke.

“Ready the Fire Storm!”

– We’re ready!

“Fire!”

The answer was immediate.

Accompanying the replies, clouds started to form atop the monsters, who were making the road for the king. The clouds were tinted red, and the clouds started to let out the contents they held within.

Hwah-roo-roohk, hwah-roo-roohk!



Fire started to rain down.

Fire Storm!

Amongst the AOE magic, it boasted the biggest range. This wasn't just a single spell being used. Several dozen Fire Storms were activated at once. In a flash, a region as large as 5 or 6 soccer fields were being impacted by showers made out of fire.

Hwah-rooo-roo!

The rain was making the trees into torches, and the vegetations were turned into a wild fire. In a flash, a sea made of fire came into being.

This was only the beginning.

“Fireball Toss!”

– Toss!

– Toss!

The monsters were making a big commotion as they felt the heat from the sea of fire. They started to run towards the source of the fire.



Several hundred monsters were running towards the Users, and enormous balls of fire started to roll towards them.

Deh-gool, deh-gool!

The balls of fire were rolling across field ablaze from fire. It was like akin to a snowball rolling down the snowbank. The balls became larger as they rolled.

When the balls of fire came close to the monsters, they were big enough to swallow the monsters.

Puh-uhng, puh-uhng!

The monsters were sent flying as if they were bowling pins. They were crushed and broken.

Kwah-kwah-kwah!

The balls of fire showed no signs of stopping, yet they were blocked by monsters, who boasted big bodies. The medium and large sized monsters stood near the Barbarian King. The Ogres, Trolls, Minotaurs and other large monsters blocked the balls of fire with their bodies.

Ooh-uh-uh!

These monsters had no choice, but to block the fireballs with



their bodies, and cries erupted from their mouths.

Still, the monsters did all they could to stop the balls of fire.

They didn't dare to let it reach the vicinity of the king!

This was the will being expressed by the monsters, who were blocking the balls of fire.

They were most definitely showing intent of blocking any danger directed towards the king.

Koo-uh-uh-uh!

When the fireballs were blocked, the monsters with loud voices started to bellow as they faced towards their enemies.

They were giving orders.

Koong, koong, koong, koong!

It was an order for all monsters to charge towards the enemies in the front!

At the command, the monsters started running as if they were competing against each other. They ran forward with the intent of killing every living being in front of them.



“The Barbarian King team is on the move.”

There was another group, who was running with a similar intent.

Two hundred Users ran along the road made by cutting the tree and uprooting the stones. The monsters had moved away, and the Users ran down this wide open road.

The battle started.

Then several dozen minutes passed.

Goo-roong, goo-roong!

Dark clouds started to gather in the sky as thunder rumbled.



## Chapter 186 – Barbarian King (3)

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8.

[The 31st Barbarian Raid attempt has failed!]

[Barbarian King Event. Will things turn out fine?]

[The 31st Barbarian King Raid team gave a team briefing. ‘We know the clear method. However, we couldn’t execute it.’]

When the Barbarian King appeared for the first time, the Users had welcomed it. They thought the existence of the Barbarian King would bring life into Warlord, which had started to become a bit boring. This view was shared by many.

Sixteen of the 30 great guilds had pulled out from the Barbarian King Event, and the Users had welcomed the news.

Recently, there had been historic events that had unfolded in Warlord. This included the Frozen Kingdom episode, Blaze Slime Dragon Raid and the Anugas Raid. However, most normal Users hadn’t been able to enjoy these contents. They were playing the same game, yet it felt as if they were a world apart.

This was why the normal Users hadn’t been worried when the 30 great guilds announced their nonparticipation. They didn’t question the actions of the 30 great guilds.



“Finally, we get to enjoy something.”

“This is a completely different scenario from the Immoral Prince raid. There are no restrictions. Everyone can participate in it!”

“This is different from the great battle. All Users can fight. This will be easy. The ones to benefit will be the people, who kill it first!”

This was why everyone thought it was their chance to shine. They wanted to become the protagonists of this enormous event

“If I catch the Barbarian King, I’ll become the second coming of the Hahoe Mask!”

“I’ll guarantee it. The killing of the Barbarian King would bring in more money than winning a lottery ticket.”

The Hahoe Mask had gained money and fame through playing Warlord.

This was a chance for someone to become the next Hahoe Mask.

This was what people thought, and they started acting accordingly.

Then they realized something.



They realized how foolish they had been. The Barbarian King ruthlessly crushed the expectations and hopes of the Users.

- Isn't the difficulty for the Barbarian King Raid too high?

- The average level of the monsters nearby are over Level 220.... They number in the thousands. If we grade this as if it was a hunting ground, this might be considered to be a level 270 hunting ground.

The Barbarian King was powerful. It had several thousand monsters under its command, and they had an average level of 220.

- How about the method used during the great battle? What about the Eat the Tail method?

- ⊥ It doesn't work.

The underlings of the Barbarian King was different from the Corrupted monsters from the great battle. They were smarter. They also possessed their original battle instincts, yet they were able to move in perfect order as a group.

- No, the problem isn't really about killing the miscellaneous monsters. We can take care of them through large scale magical bombardment. However, the problem is the Barbarian King!

- The 1st Phase isn't easy.



- ⊥ Isn't it just destroying the Protection Gems?
- ⊥ Two to three Strikers are killed when destroying just one Gem.

However, the biggest conundrum was the Barbarian King itself.

The Barbarian King was strong. While the Gems on its armor was active, magical and physical attacks had no effect.

Basically, the first button that had to be opened was to destroy the 31 Gems embedded on the Barbarian King's armor. The destruction of the Gem couldn't be done through magic. It had to be done through physical attacks.

Moreover, it couldn't be destroyed with one powerful blow.

Twice!

It didn't matter how strong one's attack was. It took two powerful attacks to destroy a single Gem.

- The Barbarian King's battle capability is too high. Aggro management with this bastard is useless.

- ⊥ This is the crux of the problem. The Barbarian King's difficulty level is out of our league.



- ⊥ The skilled Strikers can't last against the Barbarian King.

When a User stuck close to the Barbarian King's body, it reacted immediately. If a User tried to stick to the body, it immediately reacted by stepping on the Users with its enormous feet. It also used its long arms to dislodge the Users.

When caught by the hands of the Barbarian King, the Users were crushed.

In the past 31 attempts at the Barbarian King Raid, no Users had survived being caught by the Barbarian King's hands!

- The destruction of the Protection Gem is at least doable. The problem is the 2nd Phase.

- The Storm Judgement Mode is messed up.

However, the worst and the most ridiculous part occurred when it entered into the 2nd Phase.

When all the Protection Gems were destroyed, the Barbarian King's golden armor lost its power. It was possible to stab the Barbarian King, and magical spells could harm it. However, at the same time, the Barbarian King carried out the Dragon's Judgement.



Dark clouds started to fill the sky, and a random User nearby was struck down by the Judgement. The Judgement was so powerful that a Tanker fully equipped with Lightning Resistant set suffered a Game Over by being hit once. Even if one was able to survive it, the Stun Effect would last for 10 minutes, so one would basically be a living corpse. No Skill could undo the Stun.

- Its healing ability is more messed up than the Storm Judgement Mode.

- ⊥ This is the biggest problem. Who cares if magical and physical attack works? It just recovers from everything.

As the Users faced these tribulations, the Barbarian King displayed an almost unlimited healing ability. It was a monster amongst monsters. The idea of facing such a Boss monster was almost unimaginable.

At a certain point, the Users gave up.

Everyone now wanted someone else to catch the Barbarian King. They left it alone as they harbored such expectations.

However, the tyranny of the Barbarian King didn't end there.

[The monsters are moving with the Barbarian King?]

[Please investigate the regen rate by comparing the region before and after the Barbarian King appears.]



[It's confirmed. The regen rate of the monster decreases sharply after the Barbarian King passes by!]

The the Barbarian King passed by a region, and it pulled the nearby monsters. No monsters were left behind.

In some ways, this was the biggest blow to the Users.

When the Iron Lion Road was discovered, the Users no longer had to be stalled by the Voodook's Tunnel. They started crossing the Urugal mountain range using a wide road.

This was why a significant number of Users over level 200 had stepped onto the Black Continent. Naturally, there was a shortage of monsters.

While this shortage was ongoing, the appearance of the Barbarian King dropped the regen rate.

To top it off, a half a dozen Users had to compete with each other for a single monster. It was a scene that reminded one of the early days of Warlord. The situation now repeated with Users over level 200.

To make things worse, the Five Stars and the 30 great guilds had already taken over the decent hunting grounds. They had taken advantage of their early arrival at the Black Continent.



Of course, they didn't allow the normal Users to hunt in their hunting grounds.

The normal Users couldn't even properly express their dissatisfaction. The normal Users weren't the Hahoe Mask.

- Shouldn't the 30 great guilds step forward?
- Didn't they announce their nonparticipation?
- └ Isn't this a dereliction of duty if they do nothing?
- └ Didn't the normal Users commend them for not participating?
- └ Still, this is too much! We can't even play the game! We can't even hunt! It has been 5 hours, since I've logged on. I only caught nine monster!
- The hamsters of Tobot Soft.... Please spread the monsters!

In the end, the key to the start and end of the event was being held by the 30 great guilds.

The normal Users wanted them to use this key to end the Barbarian King event.



However, the 30 guilds didn't move.

Several guilds tried to move, but they were interfered by other guilds.

However, the silence by the Five Stars and the Stormhunters guild hurt the most, since they possessed the most influence on the Black Continent.

In the end, the Users gave up. A portion of the Users returned to the other side of the Urugal mountain range. The Black Continent was slowly reverting back to what it was before it was found.

– The Hahoe Mask wants to catch the Barbarian King?

In such turbulent times, a hero started to move.

The Hahoe Mask had kept his silence up until that point. He was north of the Red Desert. He had been catching the Tattoo Scorpions in the Red Wildland, but now a rumor started to gain traction.

– Even the Hahoe Mask wouldn't be able to catch the Barbarian King by himself.

– ㄴ I agree.

– ㄴ Even the Hahoe Mask can't do this.



The Users were pessimistic about the rumor. The Hahoe Mask was an extraordinary gamer, but the Barbarian King was too big to taken down by himself.

- That is why the Hahoe Mask is gathering Users to fight with him.

- He is gathering Users?

- ⊥ From what I hear, he'll take a screenshot with everyone, who participates.

- ⊥ Really?

- ⊥ He will also give out Hahoe Masks made by him!

In such a situation, a new rumor gained steam.

Afterwards, Hahoe Mask spoke through a youtube video. He addressed the rumor.

“I'll battle the Barbarian King. Please open a way for me. If you set up the stage and occupy the monsters, I'll defeat the Barbarian King. The stage will be at the Bizma Plains. I'll battle the Barbarian King there. Please I need all your help.”

It was no longer a rumor. Hahoe Mask started his recruitment



pitch.

“It doesn’t matter, who you are. Everyone is welcome to join. Moreover, I’ll be handing out a Hahoe Mask to anyone who joins.”

The Event started for real.

9.

“Please don’t get too close to me. It’ll look too friendly.”

“What?”

“I’m kidding. Please get closer to me.”

There was a long line. At the front of the line, a User wearing a shoddy Hahoe Mask was taking a picture with the Hahoe Mask. Every User in line either had a Hahoe Mask on their face or they were holding one in their hand.

While the Users were waiting, 50 Skeletons were dancing off to the side. The group of Skeletons were doing a dance from Michael Jackson’s Thriller music video. They were dancing without music, and it caused the Users to burst out in laughter instead of clapping.

“The Skeletons are cute. I want to keep one as a pet.”



“You want to make it your pet? I bet it is stronger than you.”

“If the Hahoe Mask flicks his fingers twice, this place will turn into hell.”

Then there was a large Bone Dragon, which was 20 meters in length, lying off to the side. Users climbed atop it to start taking pictures. Some even got on the back to make it look like they were riding the Dragon.

“I’m a Dragon Rider!”

“Hey. I want you to take a good picture of me!”

In a different corner, a 10 meter tall Earth Golem was standing still. The Users were conducting a climbing competition.

It was an event set up for Strikers, who wanted to show off their climbing skill. In a flash, the Strikers climbed to the the head of Golem.

Some Users clapped their hands when they saw this.

On the other hand, no Users were climbing up the Iron Golem. The Iron Golem was too slick to climb. Instead, the Iron Golem was being used as a surface where the Users could graffitti on it.

This was the Hahoe Mask theme park!



Couple days ago, this place was where the Users fought desperately against the monsters. However, the Bizma Plain held a festive atmosphere right now.

‘Whatever.’

Of course, Hyrkan had to do all of this for free, so it was driving him nuts.

Hyrkan gritted his teeth when he couldn’t see the end of the line.

“Hahoe Mask-nim. Cheese! Cheese!”

At Hyrkan’s expression, the User demanded a smile for his screenshot.

“Cheese.”

Hyrkan yelled out cheese.

The User seemed satisfied by the result, so the User distanced himself from the Hahoe Mask to check the screenshot. Then a new User sidled up next to Hyrkan.

“Say cheese.”



The User immediately asked for him to say cheese, and Hyrkan couldn't turn down the request.

‘Yes, I’ll laugh.’

Tomorrow these Users, who were demanding him to say cheese, would fight the Barbarian King’s underlings with their lives on the line.

At that moment, Hyrkan thought about what happened couple days ago.

Whistling told Hyrkan of his plan to spread the rumor that the Hahoe Mask would be participating in the Barbarian King Raid.

First, the rumor was disseminated. When the rumor became ripe, Hahoe Mask used his youtube page to gather the Users. Afterwards, Hahoe Mask made a theme park at the Bizma Plain. This was where the battle would take place.

In truth, they hadn’t planned on putting up the Hahoe Mask theme park. Hyrkan had planned on giving a speech to the gathered Users.

He would have said they were the only ones that could stop the Barbarian King. He would have warned them about the consequences that would result if they failed. The Black Continent would be turned into an inhospitable land. He had wanted to warn the Users about the dangers again.



He wanted to make an resistance army.

However, everyone had ignored his idea.

“Who’ll come if you do that?”

“I agree. No one wants to play the game under such a heavy cloud. We are playing to have fun.”

Who would want to come if he did that?

Most Users just wanted to enjoy this game. They didn’t want to play under such a heavy atmosphere. Not many people wanted to play as if they were under a gun.

This was why Users avoided such desperate struggles.

No one wanted to throw their bodies into a dangerous battle under such circumstances especially when it was almost a given that they’ll suffer a 48 hour break.

On the other hand, the Users wouldn’t mind giving up 48 hours if the task turned out to be interesting and fun. They would invest their time if it was a task they liked.

“How about we make a theme park? It’ll be a theme park where Users will be able touch Hahoe Mask-nim’s familiars!”



“That sounds great. What has gotten into you? How could you come up with this plan?”

“Yes. Of course, you would never be able to come up with such an idea.”

“What? Are you trying to pick a fight with me?”

This was how the plan for a Hahoe Mask theme park came into being. They had expected a strong resistance from the Hyrkan, but he was receptive to the idea. This surprised everyone. Whistling became the representative of the surprised group, and he asked the question in everyone’s mind.

“Are you really fine with this?”

At the question, Hyrkan gave an answer.

“They are willing to die for me, so at the very least, I should do this for them. Moreover, Yojori is right. People play this game to have fun. If it isn’t fun, who would want to play this game?”

Hyrkan recalled the answer he had given before.

‘Yes. They are here to die for me, so I should smile for them.’

“Cheese.”



10.

From the beginning, Warlord's days were numbered. To be precise, an order was given to the M.I. by the Tobot Soft after the M.I. created Warlord.

It was told to create a Quest that could be carried out by the Users. Three Main Scenario Quests were made, and the game's setting could be changed as it progressed. Each Main Scenario Quest had to have contents that would last a year. They wanted a game they could produce and run for 3 years.

The command they had given was a test parameter.

It was a test to see if the M.I. could produce and run the game correctly.

Then Tobot Soft wanted to check how well their orders were being completed.

This was why they picked capable and competent testers to check out the Virtual Reality.

If things went according to plan, this test would last for two years.

However, two variables occurred afterwards.



The first variable was the fact the Warlord's degree of completion was beyond imagination.

The second variable occurred when Tobot Soft ran into financial troubles. They were developing various project simultaneously using artificial intelligence. They were producing virtual reality content, yet they didn't have a business model to gain revenue. The investors started to hound them.

In the end, they had to make revenue any way they could. They had to satisfy the investors, so Warlord was immediately put into service. This immediately turned Tobot Soft in the new leader of the VR contents market.

At that time, Toby Gwynn had made calculations. He figured out how much money they would rake in from delaying the Main Scenario Quest by one year. Then he calculated the time he would need to come up with another content that would put them on the top again. At that moment, Tobi Gwynn gathered the original testers, and he offered them a new contract.

This was when the Hands guild was formed.

At first, the Hands guild directed events from the shadows. They slowed down the consumption of the game content. It wasn't too hard. The content called the Main Scenario quest was consumed the fastest by the 30 great guilds. So they just had to control the 30 great guilds.

However, a User had appeared one day, and he was better than



the 30 great guilds. Moreover, it was impossible to bargain with or recruit this User. All the tactics used by the Hands guild didn't work on him. In the end, they had to send out a member named Horus as an agent. He was sent out to dominate the 30 great guilds, and he would forcefully change the flow of events in Warlord. Of course, this plan also failed.

However, the important point here was the fact that not all the members of the Hands guild were exposed to the sun.

They formed a powerful group within the shadows as preparation. These skilled Users would be able to do the dirty work, since the faces of these Users wasn't known.

“It is finally our turn.”

“I never expected the Hahoe Mask to move.”

“We've waited for this day, and we even have the chance to become the victors of this game.”

They had been waiting for this day.

“Let's go over our plan again. Our goal is to interfere with the Hahoe Mask, who is trying to hunt down the Barbarian King. When the Hahoe Mask suffers a Game Over, he has no choice, but to be summoned back to the Heard Fortress ruin town. Once he is revived there, the Five Stars will get in his way. We'll kill the Hahoe Mask every time he respawns.”



They would permanently erase the source of their troubles.

“I want you guys to infiltrate the crowd that’ll help him. We’ll help the Hahoe Mask. However, when he enters the 2nd Phase after he successfully destroys the Gems..... We’ll interrupt the Hahoe Mask at that moment. Any questions?”

“None.”

“I have none.”

“All right. It is time for our revenge. We have to make sure our stock options kick in.”

This desire caused them to move.



## Chapter 187 – Barbarian King (4)

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11.

“Good job.”

Hyrkan felt drained as he had to meet and greet with several thousand Users for the past couple hours. Whistling spoke to him. Hyrkan looked at Whistling as he shook his head from side to side. Then he let out his complaint in a low voice.

“Why do Elves matter so much.....”

Of course, Hyrkan knew why Whistling had moved against the Barbarian King. Whistling didn't want the Elven tribes to become exterminated by the Barbarian King. In turn, Whistling was the reason why Hyrkan had moved. Basically, the Elven tribes had caused a shift inside Warlord. This was the behind the scene story for this war.

“I'm sorry.”

Whistling let out a bitter laugh, and he gave his apology.

“I'm not doing this for nothing.”

“I'll take you out for a big night out later.”



At Whistling's answer, he no longer spoke. Instead, Hyrkan turned his head.

Bizma Plain.

The Skeletons, Golems, and Bone Dragon decorating the place was no longer present. However, the Users hadn't left. They were guarding their spot. At times, the bored Users hunted the monsters nearby, and this was another diversion they could watch.

Their continued presence was an evidence of longing they were feeling. They had just experienced something uniquely fun inside the game of Warlord, and this was proof that the Users wanted to enjoy it for a little bit longer.

This also meant the Users had fully enjoyed what Hyrkan had to offer.

However, at this time tomorrow, this place would become a desperate battlefield.

‘This is a game.’

The world had changed in just a single day, and it should have been a frightening sight. However, this wasn't reality. Since this was happening within a game, this wasn't out of the ordinary.

‘Since it's a game.....’



Hyrkan chewed over this truth.

It was a game.

He chewed over the new feeling he was starting to dimly feel. It was something he had never felt before. Hyrkan fell into his thoughts as he tried to identify this vague feeling.

“First, 6322 people have signed up to participate in the Raid.”

Whistling’s words pulled Hyrkan back into reality.

The goal for the Hahoe Mask theme park was to gather allied forces, who will join him in this Raid. However, Hyrkan hadn’t said cheese for free. He couldn’t force these Users to participate, but he obtained signatures from the Users, who were going to participate in the Barbarian King Raid.

The number was 6,322.

“The ratio isn’t too bad. The important fact is that 2,551 Tankers signed up. It is a pretty high number.”

The Tanker was the most important position in pulling off this plan, and the number of Tankers, who signed up, was higher than expected.



“They are all over level 200, and they finished their 2nd Advancement. This means it is a force big enough to rival three or four 30 great guilds. Moreover, these are Users, who stayed behind in the Black Continent even with this event going on. Their skills are above average.”

They hadn't tested the quality of the Users, but these Users were all above average by default. Even with the appearance of the Iron Lion Road, it was tough to operate within the Black Continent.

The deciding factor was the fact that the Black Continent was filled with nightmare right now. However, these Users refused to leave, and their will to fight was burning. Aside from skills and extrinsic factors.....

In terms of mental toughness, they were also above average.

“If half the number shows up, I will have no complaint.”

At Hyrkan's words, Whistling didn't feel too good about the situation, but he nodded his head.

In terms of gathering people, it was beyond his expectation.

As expected of the Hahoe Mask!

It almost made Whistling sigh in admiration. If Whistling had used the Hahoe Mask's reputation to gather the Users, he wouldn't have been able to gather 6,000 Users. He might not have been able



to gather even 3,000 Users.

Still, there was no way everyone gathered here would participate in the battle. They would be fortunate if half of them stepped forward. That would still amount to 3,000 Users.

“They’ll come. You said so many cheeses for them.”

After hearing his reply, Hyrkan started a simulation of the battle that’ll occur tomorrow on the Bizma Plain.

“They have to hold out for one hour.”

Barbarian King.

It was a monster amongst monsters, who had beaten back numerous challengers and attackers. It was the most ruthless Boss Monster to appear in Warlord. It boasted special characteristics, skills and difficulty level that made people curse.

However, for the past month, the Users hadn’t been playing around. They had attempted it 31 times. It wasn’t a small number. Tens of thousand of Users had thrown their bodies towards the Barbarian King.

It happened slowly, but they compiled a clear method for the Barbarian King. Then they threw their bodies into the Raid to see if the methods they devised actually worked.



It was like a blind man feeling the leg of an elephant to confirm that it was an elephant. This task was akin to that.

Then there was Whistling's new comrades.... One of them was named the Questman, and he came up with a conjecture using all the information he gathered regarding the Main Scenario Quest.

It had to be done during the 2nd Phase called the Storm Judgement mode.

What would happen if one could lure the Barbarian King into the path of the Storm Judgement?

It would be like the scene in a movie where a missile was lured into the path of an enemy.

Storm Judgement was the Dragon's Judgement.

Would the Barbarian King be fine from being hit by it?

Even if it survived the strike, would an abnormal status go into effect?

This hypothesis was put into action, and it was tried 31 times in the Barbarian King Raid. All of the Raids failed, but they acquired useful results. This was how they found the method to clear the 2nd Phase. When a thunder strike falls on top of one's head, it was



suicide to charge towards the currently strongest monster in Warlord.

However, this was also the most important part in taking down the Barbarian King.

Sacrifice.

Numerous sacrifices were needed to be able to latch onto the Barbarian King, and more sacrifices were needed to ensure the success of the Armor Breaking. The Judgement would inevitably fall, and in the end, Users had to put up with being sacrificed.

From start to finish, the Barbarian King required sacrifices from the challenging Users.

“Are you really planning on killing it on your own?”

However, Hyrkan planned on killing such a foe by himself.

“Just block the others from interfering with me.”

It was a preposterous task. One couldn't even say it was dumb, because it was absurd.

However, Hyrkan insisted on choosing this path. Hyrkan wasn't doing this, because he was trying to uphold the name of the Hahoe Mask.



“The Barbarian King’s attack pattern, route, clear method and speed is all in my mind. The only thing I can’t predict are the disrupters.”

There were two reasons why he was doing this.

First, there was the existence of disrupters.

There were countless number of people, who thought poorly of Hyrkan. They wouldn’t just sit back, while eating popcorn.

Moreover, the six thousand Users weren’t all hiding behind trees as they attempted to hide their identities. No, his enemies didn’t even need to hide. The disrupters just had to come to the Bizma plain in the morning, and they could just join the fight. Who would turn them away?

This was a problem with a festival. You can’t stop people from joining.

“Moreover, I’m more comfortable fighting by myself.”

There were two steps to clearing the Barbarian King Raid.

When one wanted to kill the Barbarian King in its 2nd Phase, one had to bait its special ability called Storm Judgement. This attack targeted a single User within its range. This was why the targeted



individual had to approach the Barbarian King within 3 seconds. This was also the reason why everyone said this method was impossible to pull off.

However, Hyrkan thought differently. What would happen if there was only one User within range of the Storm Judgement?

The act of finding the targeted User would be irrelevant. It would be clear, who was the target.

This was why Hyrkan chose to solo this.

“Ah. It’ll be more convenient for me, but I’m not saying it’ll be easy.”

At Hyrkan’s words, everyone swallowed their words, and they just agreed with him.

“This game is hard.”

“It isn’t just hard. It is damn hard.”

As they expressed their annoyance, Hyrkan once again looked at the Bizma Plain. He’ll be dancing with the Barbarian King tomorrow. It’ll be a fierce dance as thunder descended towards him. He’ll be dancing around the Barbarian King until the Announcement notified him that he was the target of the Storm Judgement. He’ll clash, retreat and clash again with joy.



“Still, it’ll be pretty easy to name the video.”

“You’ve already chosen a title?”

“Of course. If I don’t receive income from my videos, I can’t play this game. The title will be Ballroom.”

“Ballroom?”

“Welcome to the Ballroom.”

“Why would you name it....?”

He’ll do a dance that can only be done by the Hahoe Mask on this stage.

“I’ll really liven it up with a dance.”

12.

“Currently, there are around five thousand Users gathered at the Bizma Plain.”

“The Hahoe Mask team is getting ready for the Raid. The 30 great guilds haven’t shown up yet.”



“I’m here to join this historical event, which won’t be broadcasted through the live channels.”

Bizma Plain.

Numerous Users of all types could be seen on the vast field.

The most busy Users were the ones trying to record every step of this process. They wanted to document it, so they can sell the Barbarian King Raid footage. Hahoe Mask had given up claiming sole rights in regards to using the Raid footage for profit. He would allow anyone to record and use footage of him.

Of course, this was a small present he was giving to those, who chose to fight with him. The people, who fought with him, could record the entire process. Moreover, they could do whatever they wanted with the footage.

However, greedy Users had also gathered here like a swarm of mosquitoes. When one smiled in thanks in front of such generosity, another let out a devious smile. These Users only wanted to make money, and they weren’t going to help out in the raid.

These Users continuously moved around the Bizma Plain, and one could always hear the sound of their interviews in the air. It really sounded like the low buzzing of mosquitoes. The Interview Program allowed one to dampen the sound, so outsiders couldn’t hear the User’s voice. One could just hear a buzz.



On the other hand, the Users, who came here for the Hahoe Mask, was making preparations.

“I’ll explain the plan. The plan will unfold like this. A large scale magical bombardment will be used to decrease the number of monsters around the Barbarian King. Afterwards, the monsters will naturally be pulled by the aggro, and the Tankers will block them.”

“We’ll form the first battle line, and we’ll open a path in one location.”

“After establishing the first battle line, The Striker teams will come from eight directions to open up more paths. The Priests, Magicians and Tankers will enter through these paths. Then we have to block monsters from turning back to help the Barbarian King. Our role is to provide a stage where the Hahoe Mask can focus on battling the Barbarian King.”

These Users had enjoyed the festive atmosphere yesterday, but the tactic made them feel faint. They had to hear it again. They weren’t just listening to the tactic. They opened their holographic window, and they started drawing out the battle simulation. The prediction was drawn using dots.

“So they want the monsters between the Tankers? This is going to cause a lot of Tankers to die.”

“We have no choice. We need to form a wall on both sides, so the Hahoe Mask can go one on one with the Barbarian King.”



“I took a rough estimate, and I think there are around 2,000 Tankers here. I think about half will be sent back to the Heard Fortress.”

“If only half dies, we’ll be fortunate. If the Hahoe Mask fails, we’ll probably have to run away with a do-or-die attitude.”

The prediction didn’t look too rosy. Of course, it wouldn’t be great. In the first place, the Barbarian King Raid was designed in such a way where sacrifices were baked into the design. This Raid would need more sacrifices compared to any other Boss Monster Raids. Warlord’s System had settled on this setting. There were Users gathered here, who had experience all of this multiple time. There were also Users, who had participated in all 31 Barbarian King Raids.

“Ah. I think I’m going to die today.”

This was why worried words emanated from the Users.

“Shit. I don’t know why I voluntarily undergo hardship like this.”

Words of complaint was also heard.

“I should quit this game. Eh-whew.”



Everyone let out a sigh, but this was to be expected.

However, they were thorough in their preparations even as they spoke those words.

“Let us all connect to the Voice Talk. Ah ah. Voice Talk test. Ah ah. Voice Talk test. I want members of my team to raise their hands!”

“Our team members should say fighting! After getting in position, please go over your roles once again.”

“This is a battle where 5,000 people will participate. It is very important that everyone hold their position. Please don’t stray outside of your designated position!”

They were experts.

“Don’t try to spare your body too much!”

“If we lose the Black Continent, we’ll lose our only hunting ground. Just close your eyes and take the bullet this one time.”

“It takes about the same amount of time to walk back to the Heard Fortress compared to starting again at the town after death. It is only death. It isn’t as if we haven’t experienced it before.”

These were Users, who had reached Level 200 and the 2nd



Advancement. They were qualified to be able to step onto the Black Continent. It wasn't an achievement and result that could be reached by just playing the game of Warlord for a long time.

One had to be diligent, and one had to be better than others at the game. Moreover, one had to have love for this game.

Since this was only a game, family members and friends berated them for playing this game too much.

When will you come to your senses?

How long will you play this game?

Does oppa like this game better than me?

The game of Warlord had become part of their lives, so these Users had heard similar questions.

One had to accept these pitfalls to achieve these results.

Casual gamers?

They were definitely not that.

“All right. Let's ready the Magicians.”



“The order of attack will be fire, thunder, wind then ice. Please remember that.”

“The Barbarian King is approaching us! Fire Sea team! Get ready!”

In reality, they were called game couch-potatoes. However, in Warlord, they were proud game experts. They were combat veterans of hundreds of battles. They were experts at turning the tide of the game.

These were the types of people gathered here.

They made their resolves.

They would go out in a blaze of glory in this battle. They wanted a memory that they would remember at the end of their gamer lives.

“Holy crap. They are like a swarm of ants charging forward.”

“Well, haven’t we gathered enough Users to resemble a swarm of ants right now? I think this is the first time I’ve seen over 5,000 Users gathered in one place.”

This was how the highlight that would long remain in the history of Warlord started.



13.

It started with the rain of fire.

It was the Fire Storm.

Goo-roo-roo!

“Wow. Look at those clouds.”

The red tinged clouds started to gather atop the heads of the Barbarian King and its subordinates.

The monsters, who were quick on the uptake, quickly looked up at the clouds. The monsters expressed their wariness.

Joo-roohk!

Then the clouds started to spit out rain of fire. The range of the rain was massive. It was hard to calculate the area by using a soccer field as a reference. It felt as if the storm was coming down on a region big enough to be called a small city.

Moreover, the rain used the vegetations in the Bizma Plain as fuel, and the fire started to spread more fiercely.

It was as if the rain had caused a flooding. It created a sea of fire.



“Roll the fireballs ! ”

– We are rolling the fireballs!

Large fireballs rolled across the sea of fire.

Kwah-kwah-kwah!

The fireballs were letting out a rough sound as it rolled onward like a runaway train. The fireballs grew in size as they rolled atop the sea of fire. They grew into enormous sizes, and the small monsters were basically bowling pins in front of them.

Kuh-hyung, kuh-hyung!

However, the monsters refused to be defeated like helpless bowling pins.

The monsters, who had suffered the attack, went on the offensive. They started to select their target through aggro. When the selection ended, they started to move to destroy their targets. The ones that were the quickest were the four-legged monsters. The monsters that looked like wolves, lions and other animals separated from the horde of monsters. They led the charge.

“They are coming.”



“Are the Buffs complete?”

“Ok. It’s all done! Team 29 complete!”

“Team 33 is complete!”

The eyes of the running monsters rolled around as they let out horrible cries. When the monsters were about to reach them, the Tankers moved. They held a shield in the left hand, and the right hand held the weapon. The Tankers slowly marched towards the monsters.

After getting into position, the Tankers stood firm. They became a large wall.

-The battle has started!

-L Uh? Where are you seeing the Raid from?

-L My friend is playing the game, and he is streaming it live for me.

-L Please share the stream!

-L I want a link too!

At that moment, the online world was restless.



In many ways, this was a historical event. This event was not being led by the 30 great guilds. The Barbarian Raid was occurring through the participation of normal Users, so the fans of Warlords were very interested. The interest had peaked.

However, there was no official live broadcast of this event.

-Shit. Why aren't they broadcasting this on the live channels?

-L If they have a sense of honor, they won't do it.

-L They had taken a backseat until now, while they harvested honey inside their hunting grounds. It wouldn't be a good look if they broadcasted this.

-L I'd rather watch the Hahoe Mask's video later. Live channel? What a farce.

-L Let's just give the Hahoe Mask a live channel!

-LL I agree.

-LL I agree (2).

The 30 great guilds, who possessed the live channels, had no rights to broadcast this event.



They had purposefully allowed the tyranny of the Barbarian King to continue, and most of the 30 great guilds had enjoyed playing the game inside the hunting grounds they owned.

Hahoe Mask and the regular Users were making history, yet the 30 great guilds didn't have the right to profit off of it.

The battle on the stage of the Bizma Plain was for the regular Users. It was for Users, who looked beyond profit. It was a stage where their dreams, hopes and will was gathered.

In many ways, they were purely here to play the game.

Was this the reason why?

‘It is a grand spectacle.’

Hyrkan watched the stage as he kept his breathing steady. He waited for his upcoming battle. In Hyrkan's eyes, this battle shone more brightly than any other battle.

Grand Spectacle.

This was true whether it was before he came to the past or after.

He had participated in countless battles, yet he never saw a stage that shone as brightly as this one.



‘This is a grand spectacle.’

There were over five thousand Users gathered here. They were throwing magic, swinging swords, raising shields and praying for a single User.

Moreover, this was only the beginning.

They would continue to fight, and the battle wouldn’t even allow them to take a breather. At the very least, they would have to fight for an hour.

Of course, there would be some Users, who would log out, after giving up on this painful battle. There would also be some Users, who ran away.

On the other hand, a significant amount of Users had already accepted the risk of a Game Over. They would fight until death.

Most of the Users, who died here, would suffer losses. No one would acknowledge their deaths. They would record a Game Over, and they would have to suffer the consequences in real life by being barred from the game for 48 hours.

The 30 great guilds compensated the Users, who died in a Raid, and the Hahoe Mask style of battle was a high risk, high reward method. The regular Users were different. Their motivations were purer



‘Yes, I always wanted to fight on a stage like this.’

Hyrkan had dreamed about this sight.

He had dreamed about this stage.

He had wanted to be the main character where the Users created the stage for him. They would cheer him on as they sacrificed their lives for no cost.

‘This type of stage.....’

It had been the same even before he returned to the past. He had wanted to be on the brightest stage with the Hahoe Mask guild. He wanted to stand here with the people, who had suffered with him. Moreover, he wanted to leave behind a legacy with those people on a stage like this.

This was why the sense of betrayal he had felt had cut much deeper. He had wanted to watch this sight with them, yet they had betrayed him. Maybe this was why he violently rebelled against everyone.

‘Hnng.’

Of course, the memory from back then would not be put into the collection of memories he wanted to reminisce. No, he would no



longer be beholden to those memories. Today will be the last day he'll feel regret and anger from that memory.

‘Yes, my choice wasn’t wrong.’

He had no reason to regret now.

Hyrkan put a Timer Bone Explosive within the Bone Dragon’s body. Afterwards, he looked behind at the Skeleton Warriors, who were line up with their Bone Armors equipped.

The moment where Hyrkan would have to perform was approaching.



# Chapter 188 – Barbarian King (5)

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14.

“We broke through!”

– The path is open!

The battle began, and the confrontation opened up with the magical bombardment sent by the Magicians. Then the Tankers made a line to stop the monsters from reaching the Magicians. While both sides battled to whittle down the number of each side, eight teams started boring holes through the horde of monsters.

“Drill through! Drill through!”

“Strikers carry the Priests and Magicians in!”

“Hurry up and get in there!”

A large amount of the force started to be sucked through the holes. Then the Users started to build another wall as they stood with their backs towards the Barbarian King. It looked as if they were protecting the Barbarian King.

“We are in place!”

-After solidifying your position, I want the Healers to stick close



to the Tankers!

-You guys take charge of columns that break away!

“If the situation is desperate, the Magicians should use magic to regain the Aggro!”

-This is for the Magician Team. Please hold back from using AOE magic. It has to be Target Magic. I will say this again. Please hold back from using AOE Magic. We have to make a ring. You guys have to fight the battle through Target Magic.

This was called the Donut Plan.

It was a plan devised to stop the monsters, who had come out to protect the Barbarian King, from returning to the Barbarian King. The Tankers would block off the route back. A wall had to be formed. The Barbarian King would be at the center. The Users and monsters would form a donut shape around it.

This was the crux of the plan.

– The Hahoe Mask is getting ready.

The empty hole in the middle of the donut would be the stage where the Hahoe Mask and the Barbarian King would fight.

The start was announced by the Bone Dragon.



The Bone Dragon flew high in the sky, and it was the first to attack the Barbarian King. It was 20 meters long, and the enormous Bone Dragon was terrifying.

It was made using a level 220 Dragon type boss monster, so it was well worth its cost. The Ingredients cost tens of thousand of gold.

The Bone Dragon landed in front of the Barbarian King, and the remaining monsters near the Barbarian King charged forward. All the large monsters stuck to the enormous body of the Bone Dragon.

After several seconds....

Kwah-gwah-gwah-gwahng!

There was thousand Bone Explosives planted inside the Dragon's body, and in a flash, all the monster sticking near the Bone Dragon was swept up in the explosion.

This was the signal.

– The Hahoe Mask is on the move!

When the signal was given, Hahoe Mask started running. He started to run towards the wall that was paved with the lives of Users. The Skeleton Warriors was close behind Hyrkan.



In a flash, the group jumped over the wall made by the Users.

“Oh oh oh!”

“It’s the Hahoe Mask! Hahoe Mask-nim looked at me!”

“He didn’t look at you. He looked at the monster in front of you!”

“You are the only one we trust, Hahoe Mask! Please kill the Barbarian King!”

Hahoe Mask and the Skeletons flew over their heads like sparrows in flight. The Tankers, Priests, Strikers and Magicians gave him words of encouragement.

Hahoe Mask left the cheering Users behind as he ran towards the Barbarian King. The number of monsters charging towards the Hahoe Mask was few in number.

The Bone Dragon had been used as bait, and its suicide bombing had taken out most of the miscellaneous monsters.

The Skeleton Warriors were in charge of taking care of the leftover monsters. While Hyrkan reduced his speed, the Skeleton Warriors charged past Hyrkan to kill the monsters.

Several Skeletons unhesitatingly charged towards their master’s



biggest enemy. They fearlessly charged towards the Barbarian King.

The Barbarian King had done nothing up until now, but it moved in reaction to the Skeletons.

Hoo-oo-h-oong!

The long nose of the Barbarian King was swung like a whip. In just a single swing, two Skeleton Warriors approaching the Barbarian King was broken into pieces. However, one was able to dodge, and it approached the feet of the Barbarian King. The Skeleton Warrior stabbed the Gem embedded in the Barbarian King's armor.

It was able to hit the Gem only once.

After the Skeleton Warrior finished its single attack, it was immediately grabbed by the Barbarian King's hand.

Kwah-jeek, kwah-jeek!

The Skeleton had been equipped with the Bone Armor and the Tattoo Scorpion set. However, it was crushed in an instant.

The Skeleton Warriors were impregnable against most monsters here, yet they were easily broken. They were like toys in the hands of the Barbarian King.



The Skeleton Warriors exploded as they let out the poison of the Tattoo Scorpion, yet it had no effect on the Barbarian King.

However....

Gwah-ahng!

The explosion, which had erupted in the Barbarian King's hand, was somewhat effective. The Barbarian King's hand was frozen. The Bone Explosive held the Transcendent Rank Ancient Power, Legendary Rank Ancient Power, Mythos Rank Ancient Power and the Power of Frost. It froze the Barbarian King for 3 seconds.

The 3 seconds was a golden opportunity. Hyrkan threw his Bone Spear.

The Bone Spear flew towards the shoulder armor, and it embedded itself in a red-colored gem.

It was surprisingly accurate!

However, there was no time to marvel at Hyrkan's accuracy.

This was a fight against time.

The Users wouldn't be able to last too long against the monsters. Moreover, the Skeletons and other summonable familiars



wouldn't be able to last long against the Barbarian King.

He had to destroy 31 Protection Gems in a short amount of time.

At the very least, the Protection Gem needed two hits to break it. This meant he needed to attack it 62 times to destroy all the Gems. If each attack took a minute, one had to spend an hour in destroying the Gems.

This was why Hyrkan stayed in place. He knew what he wanted to do. He'll let out an all-out attack on the Gems. In a flash, he would strike the Gems with his Bone Spears.

He was Hyrkan.

He was a genius.

On the stage of the virtual reality game, his skill and talent was unparalleled. He was an extraordinary genius, who defied all common sense.

If he was a Magician, Ballista would probably have to give up his nickname to Hyrkan.

Hyrkan's spear flew in a tight arc. It was once again embedded in the armor's Gem.

Poo-hwaht!



[The first Protection Gem was destroyed.]

A Gem had been destroyed.

Boo-oh-oh!

At that moment, the Barbarian King let out a cry that could only be made by a beast with the nose of an elephant. The sound went on for a long time as if it was a boat horn.

Hyrkan unconsciously spoke towards it.

“Come at me! Let’s end this!”

15.

-He made his move.

On the fierce battlefield, the Strikers attempted Armor Breaking, while the Tankers held the monsters at bay. When the Armor Breaking was done, the Magicians sent their magical spells against these monsters. The Priests busily moved around to save as many lives as they could.

In such a battle, the members of the Hands guild had been calmly killing the monsters. The order came to the nine Users, who had hidden themselves amongst the crowd.



They had given a reasonable effort at killing the monsters.

They abandoned their spots.

They started walking.

They moved towards the ring being maintained by the Users, who were sacrificing their lives.

“Hey!”

Someone called after them, but they acted as if they couldn't hear the person. They redoubled their efforts to reach the stage.

Of course, they couldn't do as they pleased. There were Users tasked with dealing with changing variables, and these Users blocked the paths of the Hands guild.

“Hey. This place is off limits.”

“At, that is.....

The members of the Hands guild paused as they looked at the Users in front of them.

They weren't thinking about whether they should fight or not.



They were think of a way that'll allow them to kill the Users in front of them as soon as possible.

As they were pondering such thoughts, they looked closer at the opponents barring their way.

There was a flicker of recognition.

“Red Bulls?”

“Stormhunters?”

They finally realized, who was blocking their path.

17.

There were over 200 Users gathered in the Bizma Plain. This large group was hidden as they looked at the battle. A User wearing red robes also looked at the battlefield.

“Ah.”

As he watched the battlefield, a phone call arrived.

“Hello?”



-Hatch!

As soon as he picked up the phone, he heard an angry shout. However, he didn't frown or sulk when he heard the angry shout. Instead, he put on a smile as he spoke.

“Ah. Who is this?”

– Are you planning on breaking the contract of nonparticipation!

The caller was Horus.

Of course, Hatch knew who was calling. He had answered the call knowing Horus had called him.

“Ah. What are you talking about?”

-You dare..... How dare you double cross us like this?

“Double cross? Do you know who I am?”

-Hatch!

“Are we on friendly terms? Did we actually form a contract?”

-You son of a bitch! Do you think you'll be able to get away with this?



“I’m asking, because I really don’t know what you are talking about. What did I do wrong? You said I did something wrong, yet you don’t have a contract. Do you have any evidence that’ll stand in the court of law?”

-You bastard.

“Ah. If you want to talk in more details, you can call up our guild’s lawyer. We have a really expensive lawyer on retainer, so you shouldn’t do anything rash against us. Ah. I’m recording our current conversation. You might be called to court some day, so you should be careful.”

When he ended the call, Hahui approached Hatch.

“Who called you?”

“Ah. It was my girlfriend.”

Hatch answered in a flippant manner.

“What?”

Hahui had a horrified expression on her face. It was beyond description. Hatch was taken aback when he saw her expression. Her expression was filled with shock, and she looked as if the world was about to fall all around her.



“No, it was someone I know. It was a joke.”

Normally, he would tease her, but Hahui's expression was too incredible. Hatch unconsciously stopped himself.

“You surprised me!”

At Hatch's explanation, Hahui's expression changed instantly.

She put on a murderous expression again.

Hahui had on her usual expression, and Hatch was able to come to his senses. He responded in his usual manner.

“Why were you surprised when I said I had a girlfriend? This is strange. Are you interested in me? Do you like me?”

Instead of answering, Hahui glared at Hatch. The one to end this weird spectacle was Shir.

“Was it the Hands guild?”

“Yes.”

As soon as he answered the question, a User quickly approached them. It was a User wearing an imposing helmet with horns. It was



none other than the guild master of the Red Bulls. It was Matador Chev.

“We’ve engaged with the Helpers of the Hands guild.”

Shir immediately asked a question.

“What’s the result?”

“They are still in battle..... They are a tough opponent. “

“I want you to show them your skill. If you can’t do this, there was no point in me paying an exorbitant amount of money to purchase your guild.”

Chev let out an awkward smile instead of answering her. He was in a spot now where he had to follow her every order. He couldn’t just ignore her words.

“I’ll do my best.”

At Chev’s answer, Shir turned her head instead of answering him.

They were at the Bizma Plain.

She looked at the Hahoe Mask, who was dancing with the



Barbarian King on a stage made by the Users.

Hatch carefully spoke to her.

“What will you do if the Hahoe Mask turns down the offer?”

“We’ll go with our other plan.”

“Then..... It’ll be war with the Hahoe Mask...”

Shir didn’t answer him. She looked at the battlefield with an expressionless face.

16.

Hyrkan hadn’t used all his cards yet. Every time he was put in danger, he took out a card. When the 50 Skeleton Warriors he brought initially was turned back into Skeleton Fragments, Hyrkan summoned the Skeleton Knights.

The Skeleton Knights were on their Skeleton Steeds, and they fearlessly fought against the Barbarian King.

Hit and run!

The Skeleton Knights used the mobility of the Skeleton Steed as they performed at optimal level. A less knowledgeable person



would probably mistake the Skeleton Knights as Death Knights. In other words, it was evidence that Hyrkan's Skeleton Knights had gone through countless high level battles.

If it wasn't for Hyrkan, the Skeleton Warriors and Knights wouldn't have such excellent battle AI.

He was deeply moved.

It was as if he was a parent looking at his children excel in a brilliant manner.

However, at a certain point, he stopped himself from being impressed. In the end, the Skeleton Knights could only stall for time.

Eventually the Skeleton Knights exited the field, and the Golems started to appear in order.

The four Golems borrowed the appearance of Ogres using the Clay Play Skill. The Golems were large enough to rival the size of the Barbarian King.

However, the Golems couldn't hold out as long as the Skeleton Knights. The Barbarian King's trunk was powerful enough to destroy the Earth Golem and Ice Golem with a single blow. The demonic spirit of the Barbarian King ate away and crushed the Iron Golem. The Fire Golem was the most pitiful out of the bunch. The Barbarian King ignored the flames created by the Fire Golem.



The Fire Golem's fire was like a flame atop a birthday candle to the Barbarian King.

However, the time bought by the Golems was precious. Hyrkan was able to summon the Death Knight thanks to their sacrifices.

After appearing, the Death Knight fought the Barbarian King as if to avenge the Golems.

The Death Knight was the only one that was able to fight on equal grounds with the Barbarian King. The Death Knight didn't retreat.

When the Death Knight appeared, the [Undying] Skill was immediately activated, and it awoke more Skeleton Warriors and Knight.

The Skeleton underlings took form again, and they expressed their undying will towards the Barbarian King.

‘Thank you.’

Hyrkan was deeply moved by their efforts.

‘Thank you.’

Hyrkan was thankful of the exploits of his Skeletons.



[The 31st Protection Gem was destroyed.]

Hyrkan was able to destroy the 31st Protection Gem. It was 48 minutes into the battle.

At that moment, Hyrkan opened his mouth for the first time.

“The 2nd Phase is starting.”

Hyrkan’s voice had been low. A person next to him wouldn’t have been able to hear it.

– The 2nd Phase is starting!

However, he had spoken through his Voice Talk program.

“The 2nd Phase is starting!”

“The 2nd Phase in starting!

-The 2nd Phase is starting.!

It was like an echo. The same phrase filled the battlefield in seconds.

Hyrkan manipulated his watch. He set his watch on the second slot, and he immediately yelled out.



“Slot On!”

Goo-roo-roohng!

At the same time, the heavens let out a sound of warning.



# Chapter 189 – Barbarian King (6)

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18.

Ggoo-roong, ggoo-roong!

Dark clouds appeared in the sky. The dark clouds looked to be thunderclouds as it overtly displayed its might.

Gulp!

At this sight, everyone gulped.

“Wow. The Hahoe Mask really reached the 2nd Phase by himself.”

“The other teams were only able to do it after losing 300 Users....”

At that moment....

Zzuh-juh-juhk!

There was no warning. A bolt of thunder fell towards the ground. Everything stopped when the sound of the thunder was heard. It was as if someone had pressed the pause button. All the several thousand small battles going on in the battlefield stopped for a brief moment.



Then the battle started again.

‘What happened?’

‘Was the Hahoe Mask able to dodge it?’

‘Did he succeed?’

However, at that moment, the Users in battle only had one thought.

Did the Hahoe Mask dodge the Storm Judgement?

If it had occurred as planned, he would have dodged the Judgement.

At the same time, was he able to plant the Storm Judgement on the Barbarian King?

The answer came.

– Hahoe Mask succeeded on the first one!

It came out through Voice Talk.



“Hell yeah!”

“Wow. I got goosebumps right now.”

“Bullshit. You don’t have goosebumps. We are within the game.”

“It is a figure of speech.”

“Ok. Let’s do this! “

“The Hahoe Mask succeeded!”

A shout akin to a thunder exploded forth from the battlefield. Everyone started shouting for the Hahoe Mask.

At that moment, Hyrkan had barely avoided the thunder, and he walked near the Barbarian King’s heel. Hyrkan swallowed the sigh of relief from coming out of his mouth.

‘.....WOW.’

When the alert announcing him being the target of the Storm Judgement popped up, the three second countdown had started.

Three seconds.

It was a short amount of time where one could let out a long sigh



once, and the time would be up. He had only a brief amount of time. The enemy could stomp him, beat him to death with its trunk or squeeze him to death with its grip. However, he had to charge forward towards his enemy despite the danger.

No explanation was needed. Even if one was able to give a detailed explanation, it was something that wouldn't be believed unless one saw it.

The bolt of thunder fell, and at that moment, the thunder struck the Barbarian King. Hyrkan slipped to the side, and for a moment, the world became yellow and white.

He had goosebumps.

His body shuddered.

‘This is awesome.’

Moreover, he had a smile on his face.

‘If my timing was off by one second... No, if it was off by .5 second, I would have been sent to heaven. It wouldn't have matter what setting I had on.’

At that moment, Hahoe Mask was wearing fabric clothes.

The full set was worth 500,000 gold, and it was called the



Thunder Mage set. Moreover, he was wearing the Circlet of Purification.

He had ignored physical defense. This setting was solely put on to increase his resistance against the thunder as much as possible. The Circlet of Purification was chosen to sidestep the inevitable Stun effect that would arise when hit with the Storm Judgement. He didn't know if it'll work against the Storm Judgement, but he decided to equip it.

His combined outfit was incredibly pricey, and this set would give him one chance.

Theoretically, It meant he could survive one hit from the Storm Judgement.

However, when he witnessed the Storm Judgement, Hyrkan's intuition gave a different assessment.

‘There won't be a next time.’

He had spent an enormous amount of money as a precaution, yet he realized it wouldn't play a role in this battle.

He couldn't rely on it.

He had to think of it as him fighting the battle with his bare body.



He had to think of this as his last and only chance at this.

‘Storm..... I really have a bad relationship with anything that starts with Storm.’

The funny part was the fact that useless thoughts filled his mind at his most desperate situation.

The Barbarian King extended its hands towards Hyrkan. Hyrkan dodged a hand. Then he kept dodging.

Hweek hweek!

The Barbarian King’s attack was akin to a boxer jabbing with his fists.

Hyrkan dodged them all.

The Barbarian King became frustrated at the nimble Hyrkan, so it brought up its trunk up high before it swung the trunk downward like a whip.

Gwah-ahng!

Hyrkan threw his body to avoid the Barbarian King’s elephant-like trunk. It had come down like a bolt of lightning.



However, he didn't run away too far. He had to maintain a certain distance. If he was too far away, he wouldn't be able to get close to the Barbarian King when the Judgement starts.

[The Storm Judgement is heading towards you.]

1

When the Announcement popped up, Hyrkan dove between the Barbarian King's legs.

Jjuh-juh-juhk!

The thunderbolt impacted on the Barbarian King's body. At that moment, Hyrkan could feel it.

'It is a lightning rod. If a thunder strikes near the Barbarian King, the Barbarian King will absorb everything.'

He realized he didn't need to be too fine with the timing.

As expected, this was the method that had to be used to defeat this monster. Moreover, this leniency was a little bit of courtesy given by Warlord to the User, who carried out this method.

'Fuck. I'm so thankful that tears are coming out.'



Hyrkan was serious. The courtesy almost brought him to tears, and as if to pay back this courtesy, Hyrkan once again engaged the Barbarian King. While Hyrkan confronted it, he looked at the status of the Barbarian King.

The Barbarian King's body looked a bit charred, but it was still imposing. He didn't know how many times he would have to repeat this action. The 31st Raid team had succeeded in this method thrice before they gave up on the Raid.

It could be three, ten or twenty times. It could also be 31 times to mirror the number of Protection Gems possessed by the Barbarian King.

Hyrkan gritted his teeth.

'There's no tree that won't fall if you strike it 10 times. It would be great if Warlord's AI knew this adage....

Zzuh-juhk!

This was the 11th Storm Judgement. It let out a fierce thunderclap as it fell.

It was as if this sound had been the signal. The two groups on standby moved at that moment. They had been far away, but in short order, they came close to the wall of Users protecting the Hahoe Mask.



When the Users saw the two groups approaching, they looked at them with suspicion. Their glares turned into a look of shock.

“It’s the Stormhunters!”

“It’s the Red Bulls!”

These were two enormous guilds.

The Red Bulls had been the dragon hidden under the water until now. The Stormhunters guild had been at the forefront of leading this era.

The two guilds didn’t hide their emblems as they charged towards the stage where the Barbarian King was present.

Whistling had been going around taking down Users and monsters trying to approach the Hahoe Mask. The news was quickly delivered to Whistling’s ears.

‘Of all the....’

He knew disrupters would come. In truth, there had been couple disrupters here already. However, he would have never imagined that the Red Bulls and the Stormhunters fell into the same category. He didn’t know about the other guilds, but he had thought these two guilds had the pride and self respect that came



with their position in the 30 great guilds.

‘As expected, they are putting profits above all else?’

Of course, he understood why they were doing this.

The 30 great guilds of Warlord were organizations that were mostly driven by profit. They were basically companies. Their goal was to make money through this game.

To them, the Barbarian King Raid was worth....

At the very least, it would be a figure normal people would balk at. It was probably an enormous amount of money.

Anyways, the worst case scenario had just occurred.

‘How long will they be able to last?’

He was sure of it. It was impossible to stop them.

However, could they draw out the fight?

The fact that he was having such thoughts was the height of arrogance. Whistling, Yojori, Joba and all the regular Users could only buy some time. That was the only thing they could do.



The only thing up in the air was how long they would be able to drag this out.

Gulp!

Whistling unconsciously gulped. In truth, he didn't know how to deal with this situation.

‘Shit.’

He felt an indescribable sense of despair. Then the despair immediately changed in sorrow towards Hyrkan.

In the end, Whistling had precipitated this.

Hyrkan didn't need this stage. He could prove his worth, and be treated well elsewhere. However, Whistling had brought him to this abyss. The only thing that could comfort Hyrkan was a victory and success. That was it.

However, everything was about to be ruined. They were treading water to stay above the abyss.

“Excuse me. Shouldn't we tell him?”

Yojori asked the question. Hahoe Mask still didn't know about the appearance of the two large guilds.



“No.”

Whistling asked Yojori to keep silent.

He couldn't tell Hyrkan about this situation. Hyrkan was currently fighting a life and death battle with the Barbarian King, and his words might cause him to die. Hyrkan was fighting a battle where 1 second determined his fate. It was a battle with a razor thin margin.

As a friend, Whistling wanted to help in anyway he could. He wanted Hyrkan to be left alone, so he could carry out the battle. This was the only way he could repay his friend.

“We'll just have to block them.”

Whistling gritted his teeth.

He had already been prepared for death.

Moreover, at that moment, Whistling was thinking of different ways he could threaten the two guilds.

Was there anyway he could file a lawsuit against the Stormhunters and Redbulls for using such tactics?

Could he use this threat to scare them off?



His mind mulled over the problem.

However, he didn't have much time to ponder over this problem.

Whistling could see the Stormhunters guild close the distance with the Hahoe Mask and the Barbarian King. They were turning aside the wall of Users easily. Moreover, Whistling could see, who was in the front.

‘My god.’

Storm Queen Shir!

She was leading from the front. Aside from the Hahoe Mask, she was called the strongest in Warlord. Moreover, it would be useless to bring lawyers, the justice system and a lawsuit against her. It wouldn't work on her.

Whistling was about to lose his fighting spirit. His face looked like the face of a fighting dog, but the fight was about drain out of him.

‘Wow. It's the Storm Queen.’

“Even if I die here, I can boast about this to everyone.”

Everyone else pretty much assumed they were all going to die early on. At that moment, Whistling sheathed his sword.



“You shall not pass!”

Then he yelled out.

He used all his strength to do so.

In his lifetime, Whistling had never yelled this loud before. It was as if he was barfing out everything within him into this shout.

At the shout, the Stormhunters and the Storm Queen came to a stop.

“If you have pride in yourself as the 30 great guilds, you should leave this to the Hahoe Mask. You should think about the etiquette within Warlord!”

They stopped, but Whistling kept shouting.

“At the very least, you should keep the gamer’s code of conduct!”

At Whistling’s shout, Shir glared at Whistling. Shir, who was looking straight at Whistling, was beautiful. However, her expression was indescribably cold. Whistling didn’t avoid her gaze. He glared at her like a fighting dog.

While this terrifying war of gazes was occurring, a third person spoke up.



“We are here to make a deal with the Hahoe Mask.”

Ballista Hatch.

He had been at the back of the group. He ran forward as he shouted.

“We started the Barbarian King event. Of course, we also possess the key that will allow us to finish off the Barbarian King. If we let things be, the Barbarian King will start up its activities again.”

Hatch gave an explanation.

When he ended the explanation, Shir added her words.

“Even if I do fight with the Hahoe Mask, there is no way I’ll fight him here. So get out of my way.”

Whistling gritted his teeth.

19.

When the thunder fell another 10 times, the Barbarian King froze in place.

He stood erect.



It was like a statue.

However, the Barbarian King was still alive.

‘Ah ! ’

Hyrkan watched this sight, and for the first time, he let out a sigh of relief inside his head.

The clear method was effective.

[The Barbarian King Nesha has fallen asleep.]

[The Barbarian King Nesha will awaken in 24 hours.]

However, the next System Announcement knocked down all his achievements in one fell swoop.

‘This fucking game!’

It was the worst possible situation.

He was well aware of the possibility of a 3rd Phase. He had expected the Barbarian King to go nuts, so he had prepared accordingly. However, he hadn’t been prepared for this scenario.



At the same time, he had no idea how he should deal with this scenario.

[Barbarian King Nessa will awaken from his sleep in 23 hours 50 seconds.]

In front of Hyrkan, the Warlord started its cold, heartless and cruel countdown.

‘I..... I have to kill this bastard.’

At that moment, Hyrkan thought about all the Users, who had given up their lives for him.

Losses?

That didn’t matter.

It hadn’t been important in the first place. He didn’t play this game for the money. He had needed the money to become the best in Warlord.

He was afraid of the disappointment.

These Users had put their lives on the line for him. They had fought for his victory, and even the dead Users were cheering from outside the game. He was afraid of the sense of disappointment that’ll be felt by those people.



“I have to kill it!”

Eventually, he shouted at the top of his lungs towards the Barbarian King Nessa.

-Hyrkan. The Stormhunters guild and Red Bulls guild is heading your way.

At that moment, he heard Whistling's voice.

-They want to propose a deal.

Hyrkan turned his head. He could see a large group heading towards the center of the plain.

He could see her.

Storm Queen Shir!

She wasn't wearing her helmet, and her hair was whipping around her. She brought her group towards him.

Hyrkan looked at them.

As time passed, Shir and Hyrkan stared at each other.



“This will be my final proposal.”

Shir opened her mouth.

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1. .. 2... ↩



# Chapter 190 – Emperor of Solo Play

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1.

In historic events, there are times when an inexplicable gap in the story occurs. There was a sense that something had gone on, but no one knows the details. It is never recorded, and the people, who participated in these events, carry the information to their graves.

The conversation that was about to start right now happened within this gap.

“I’m sorry, but your conversation partner will suddenly shift from a beauty to a man. As you probably know, our Queen really likes you. This is why she always took on deals that were harmful to us when dealing with you. This is why I feel obliged to step forward.”

Hatch spoke as he looked at the User in front of him.

Hyrkan was wearing a Hahoe Mask, and he wore a yellow robe, which was reminiscent of a flash of thunder.

Hatch felt as if he was staring at a monster.

‘I never expected him to get this far.’



No, he really was a monster. He used his own power to put the Barbarian King to sleep. He made the impossible into reality. He succeeded in a task that one would have a hard time believing it happened even if one saw it.

‘Either we can ally with him or we can crush him. If not, the Hahoe Mask... There are no other choice left for him.’

Hatch calmed his emotions in front of the monster. He forced himself to smile as he spoke.

“Since we serve the same teacher, let’s de-escalate this situation. Aren’t you also a student of Ahimbree? If we consider the order in which we became students, I am your senior. Of course, I’m not asking you to treat me like a senior...”

He was trying his best to de-escalate the tense atmosphere, yet it had no effect.

Hyrkan didn’t respond.

In truth, this wasn’t the place for idle chatter. This meeting was put together to give an explanation.

“.....I’m sorry. I’ll immediately give you an explanation. I’ll tell you about the meaning behind the Queen’s proposal.”

Hoo-ooh.



Hatch took in deep breaths as he organized his words inside his head.

“Normally, the people making the game wants the people playing the game to like playing their game. This might be a lengthy explanation... Please be patient. We still have a lot of time left.”

The atmosphere settled after Hatch spoke his words. It was akin to an exhale.

“Anyways, the people, who make games for a living, have a hard time enjoying their own game. You know how it is, right? If you make something yourself, you only see the flaws. You also know which part is fun, and you know how to clear everything... Moreover, if you run into difficulty, you have cheats built-in for convenience. This naturally led to the game developers to think about wanting to play a game full of mystery. Even if the content obvious, they wanted to play a game where they didn't know the content.”

For a brief moment, he was lost in his old memories. However, he quickly stopped his reminiscence.

“This was how Warlord was born. Of course, it was made using an AI in an attempt to decrease the personnel expenditure. This was why investment after investment was sunk into it.... The creators of Warlord made it with such thoughts in mind. This was also why Warlord was able to differentiate itself from other similar games. It became the special one.”



Hyrkan still didn't respond.

“Let me expand on my explanation. In the distant past, the world's best Go players played Go against an AI. At the time, people, who didn't even know how to play Go, were excited over the match. This is an analogous situation. The AI is an unknown variable. It is also a match between AI and humanity. A victorious outcome would prove the worthiness of humanity. Warlord was made using the same premise. From one to ten, the AI would create and be in charge of everything! This would stoke the interest of the people, who usually didn't play games. They unhesitatingly invested money into creating this criteria, which would drive the interest of the masses. In other words, if this criteria was lost, Warlord loses its worth. Moreover, we aren't at a point in our AI technology where an AI can manage Warlord indefinitely.”

At this point, Hatch no longer cared how Hyrkan reacted.

“The world made by Warlord is about to come to an end. This is the last Main Scenario Quest. The only thing left after killing the Barbarian King is to acquire the artifact of the War King to fight the Dragon. After the battle with the Dragon, this game will become a normal game.”

“So what?”

For the first time, Hyrkan reacted. Hatch couldn't help, but laugh at his reaction.



“Once Warlord becomes a normal game, you won’t be able to accrue the same amount of fame and wealth. You won’t be able to earn several hundred thousand dollars just from posting a single hunting video. No company in this world would pay you exorbitant amount of money to sponsor you. Of course, you’ll be able to make money. However, it wouldn’t be at the current level. In other words, if you monkey around with the current situation, you’ll be able to earn more fame and money over a longer period of time. If you can play this game for one more year, you’ll even be able to own a building worth several millions of dollars. This is why I’m going to ask you these questions. Will you be able to kill this game knowing this? Are you willing to give up everything in the process?”

At his words, Hyrkan thought over the words that had been spoken.

Shir spoke.

“This is my last proposal.”

It was her last proposal.

“You can either finish this game with me, or you can go to war with me.”

He could share the glory of ending Warlord with her or he could extend the life-cycle of Warlord by fighting against her.



He had to choose one of those options.

After she put forth her short proposal, Hatch stepped forward to block off Shir. Shir's proposal was abrupt, and Hatch had to interpret and explain her words.

Thanks to his efforts, Hyrkan was able to understand everything.

He now knew what was going on around him.

He now understood what was going on in this world called Warlord.

Moreover, he had an idea on what he should do from now on.

“Were you perhaps a programmer?”

At Hyrkan's question, Hatch nodded his head.

“Yes, it was my past occupation.”

“Did you participate in creating Warlord?”

“I wasn't directly involved. If Warlord was a person, I pretty much made the pinky toe.”



“Before I give you guys an answer, I’ll say couple things.”

Hatch nodded his head in agreement.

“First, I’ll complete this game. I’ll do it even if you guys interfere with me. Even if all of the 30 great guilds interfere with me, I’m going to end this game.”

As if Hatch understood Hyrkan’s position, he nodded his head.

“Moreover, I’m not afraid of starting a war with the Stormhunters. I’m not saying this as a bluff. I’m telling the truth. I don’t care if I win or lose. If the Stormhunters guild starts a war with me, I won’t avoid it. In other words, even if I do pick one of the two options, I’m not making it out of fear of the Stormhunters.”

“Ha ha.....”

Hatch let out a short laugh. At his laugh, Hyrkan laughed. There were many emotions mixed in with that laugh.

“Lastly, I will never wear that in this game.”

“What?”

Hatch stopped his laughter in surprise. Hyrkan was pointing at his chest.



It was the emblem of the Stormhunters.

At that moment, Hatch was curious to hear his answer, so he asked Hyrkan a question.

“Why do you keep refusing to join our guild? In truth, it isn’t as if we are treating you badly. If how I was treated was used as a baseline, you were....”

At Hatch’s objection, Hyrkan put his index finger over his lips to shush him.

Hatch closed his mouth.

When silence descended, Hyrkan opened his mouth.

“I’ll turn down the proposal. However, I’m willing to make a deal.”

2.

The gap ended, and history once again moved along.

[Barbarian King Nesha was sealed.]

“Uh?”



“Really?”

The Users crowding the Bizma Plain, and all the Users connected to the game heard the Announcement.

The news was immediately spread outside. It was the version of the story with a gap in it.

All the people ranging from having little to do with Warlord to the ones where the game took center in their lives became aware of the news.

-My god.

-Wow.

-The Hahoe Mask really....

He had done it.

Hahoe Mask.

He made the impossible possible, and he turned despair into hope. He turned a nightmare into a dream of good omen. Hyrkan turned himself into a legend.



3.

“Hyrkan!”

Whistling ran towards Hyrkan. He looked as if he wanted to squeeze Hyrkan to death with a hug.

However, Hyrkan was firm with his words when he saw Whistling running towards him.

“If you attempt to hug or kiss me, I’m going to kill you.”

Duhp-suhk!

Whistling ignored Hyrkan’s words, and he hugged Hyrkan.

Hyrkan let out a yell.

“Hey!”

“Thank you.”

After saying those words, Whistling hugged him harder. If this was happening in real life instead of the game, Whistling’s tears would have made Hyrkan’s shoulder wet.

This was how much gratitude Whistling felt towards Hyrkan.



Hyrkan pried Whistling off of him. Hyrkan's Strength stat was much higher, so he was able to easily escape from Whistling's hug.

“All right. Let's get ready to end this. Of course, since I caught it by myself, all the loot is mine.”

Even at that moment, Hyrkan was making calculations. Whistling couldn't help, but laugh at this. Whistling knew this was Hyrkan's attempt at cheering him up. This had started out as a festival, and he wanted it to remain a festival. This was why Whistling didn't say any more unnecessary words. He didn't say thank you, sorry or great work to him.

“All right. You take everything. You should eat it all!”

He agreed enthusiastically with Hyrkan.

At that moment, he was being cordial, but many thoughts crowded Hyrkan's head.

‘I never expected First One to be a program....’

He had made a deal with the Stormhunters guild.

The Stormhunters guild carried out their part of the deal by telling Hyrkan how he could reach the end of this game.



One of the requirement was for Hyrkan to jump past the level of First One Sulwoo.

Hatch gave an explanation.

“First One Sulwoo is a program. In the first place, it is impossible for a person to play the game like the First One. The First One’s role is to manage Warlord, and it is a M.I. that plans out the content. It measure the level difference between Users and the First One. It is a measuring stick of how far the game had progressed. Depending on how much distance the front-runners close with the First One, it controls the speed of progress in the game.”

Hyrkan was baffled when he heard the explanation. However, it did explain why not much content was being made by First One Sulwoo compared to its fame and profile. The K media company created the videos, and this was why most of its hunting video was in diary format. This was also the reason why there was no footage of First One Sulwoo conducting a raid..

“That really screws with the User in the number 2 Rank. I would have sued Tobot Soft if I was second in the Level Ranking.”

At the same time, he felt sorry for the Users, who sacrificed their lives, to catch First One’s level.

“What can we do about it? In the first place, Warlord was a game made to test the AI. They didn’t plan for all of this, and they deserve to be sued. Anyways, let’s get back to the main topic. If you



pass the First One, you'll be taking away the pencil and eraser used by the M.I. It would no longer be able to solve problems in managing Warlord. Of course, this forces the M.I. to wrap everything up. It basically puts forth the final boss into this world."

He had to catch up to the First One.

This was how he reached the epilogue.

Moreover, Hyrkan planned on doing just that.

If he wanted to do this, he had to kill the Barbarian King. Moreover, he needed the Chronicle Unique Item dropped by the Barbarian King.

'I'll catch up to it immediately.'

Hyrkan didn't plan on wilting down the home stretch.

He would burn bright until the end. He'll be a torch and a symbol that will decorate the end.

On top of that, he planned on becoming the true emperor.

'Emperor of Solo Play. That sounds awesome.'



“No matter how I look at, this we are taking a loss on this deal.”

They had left the Bizma Plain, and they were heading towards the Heard Fortress Ruin. After struggling with his thoughts, Hatch finally opened his mouth.

“Queen. This really is a preposterous deal. Why did we purchase the Red Bulls? Why did we ally with the Hydra guild? Didn’t we do it, so we could put the name of the Stormhunters in the end credits?”

At his words, Shir didn’t say anything. Instead of an answer, one corner of her mouth kept twitching.

“Yet you are going to allow the Hahoe Mask to catch the Dragon by himself? Moreover, we are going to give him our full support? Why are we acting in this retarded manner? We did all the hard work, yet we are giving everything to the Hahoe Mask on a silver platter! It isn’t as if the Hahoe Mask is fighting as a member of the Stormhunters guild!”

Hatch shook his head from side to side. He realized his words were having no effect on Shir, so he immediately changed the target of his anger.

“How can the Hahoe Mask be so confident? He doesn’t even know what the final boss is, yet he wants to face it alone? Does he realize how kind of opponent a Dragon is? That bastard is weird. I’m pretty sure he has around half a dozen screws loose inside his head.”



“If the Hahoe Mask fails, it’ll be our turn. I don’t see the downside.”

Chev, who had been silently listening to Hatch’s rant, gave his opinion.

Hatch couldn’t help, but laugh at his words.

“Ah, is that so? Is that why you just gave Argardo to the Hahoe Mask?”

“That’s...”

“This is the Hahoe Mask’s strategy. He tells others to catch it if he fails. However, that guy never fails. It was the same in the Anugas Raid. If the Hahoe Mask failed in the Anugas Raid, we would have been next. However, the Hahoe Mask killed Anugas.”

Chev let out a bitter laugh.

At that moment, Shir’s twitching mouth opened.

“If the Hahoe Mask fails, the Dragon is ours.”

“That’s.....”



“On the other hand, if the Hahoe Mask succeeds, he is mine.”

Hatch was about to mutter something, but he gave up on it. He knew better than anyone.

‘Shit. The Queen is totally head over heels for the Hahoe Mask.’

Hahoe Mask had given a counter-proposal.

He would kill the Dragon on his own.

Moreover, if they helped him, he would put on the name of the Stormhunters in a different game.

‘Uh-whew. This guild has no one, who is of sound mind. They are all crazy. Now the craziest one of them all will be joining us. Words don’t even work on him.’

Hatch thought about the Hahoe Mask, who would become his comrade at the conclusion of Warlord. He let out a sigh.



# Chapter 191 – Epilogue

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1.

[Hahoe Mask has reached 1st place in the Warlord's Level Ranking!]

[Tobot Soft's Official Announcement: 'The Ruined King episode will be the last Main Scenario Quest.']

[Tobot Soft's stock is on the decline. Is this a sign that Warlord's bubble is about to pop?]

[Big Smiles guild has been disbanded. They gave up on the rights to a live channel. It is proof that the operating income for the live channels of the 30 great guilds have dried up.]

[Hahoe Mask's Shocking Announcement: 'I will retire after the war with the Dragon.']

[Warlord has become a setting sun.]

[After Warlord, which VR game will succeed in becoming the special one?]

[Hydra guild has set up a Player Care System for games. They have found the 'Hydra company.']



[In an interview with the founder of the Hydra Company, Eric Gomes states, ‘Our ability to support and progress in the game has been tested through Warlord. Now regular Users can receive the same care and support from us.’]

[Che-sulyun’s interview: ‘I’m establishing the Stormhunters team, who will play VR games professionally. It won’t just be Warlord. Everyone will be able to see the brilliant exploit of the Stormhunters guild in other VR games.’]

[This is the era of VR eSports. Hahoe Mask is the eye of the storm. Will anyone be able to acquire him and dominate this era?]

[It is the start of the final war between the Hahoe Mask and the Dragon. It will be broadcasted live using the Stormhunters guild’s live channel! The advance sale of the live ticket has reached 20 million!]

2.

One couldn’t measure the length of the Dragon with one’s eyes. The Dragon was unfathomably large, and it was flying through the darkened sky.

“Uh-whew....”

A User wearing a Hahoe Mask was looking at the Dragon from the ground. He let out a deep sigh.



‘This game is really fucked up.’

After letting out a sigh, Hyrkan raised his head again to look at the Dragon. It was one kilometer long. It was capable enough to bring calamity to the world. It was the final boss with an awesome presence.

Its official name was Dragon.

However, the Users added the ‘of Calamity’ to the short name. The title stuck.

‘I’ll have to climb from the tail to reach its body. Then I have to stab the War King’s Spear into the wound on its neck.’

In short order, Hyrkan would have to start his monster hunt against the ridiculous Dragon of Calamity.

The hunting method was simple.

When the one kilometer long Dragon approaches the ground, the Dragon’s tail will touch the ground. As the tail scrapes across the ground, one would have to stick to the tail. This was the starting point. As the Dragon ascends into the sky, he would have to travel from the tail to the neck. He had to crawl up a distance of 1 kilometer, then he would have to find the wound on the neck. Then he just had to plant the crude looking spear into the wound.

He had to be cautious of only one thing.



Falling!

The Dragon's body moved so roughly that a rodeo couldn't hold a candle to this. The only thing one had to worry about was falling off the Dragon.

"I really want to see what the bastard, who made this shitty game, looks like."

This was obvious, but everything about this was insane. Moreover, Hyrkan had to solo this craziness.

Hyrkan already felt queasy.

He didn't have a fear of heights, but he would probably develop one that day.

– Get ready, Hahoe Mask.

At that moment, a clear and very beautiful voice rang out inside the Hahoe Mask's ears.

– The tail will reach the ground soon.

Shir had a voice that was very easy on the ears. However, instead of smiling, Hyrkan frowned a little bit.



“I know.”

He answered in a brusque voice.

– Bear this in mind. When you climb the Dragon’s tail.....

“I’m more knowledgeable than about the process, so you don’t have to explain it to me.”

– Also, when this game ends.....

“Let’s talk about it when we get to that point. Stop treating me like your underling. I’m unaffiliated right now. Stop telling me what to do.”

– I’m sorry.

At that moment, Shir apologized when she heard his brusque response. Hyrkan suddenly became speechless.

‘...this is driving me nuts.’

Shir responded in such a docile manner that Hyrkan had a hard time accepting the situation.

“You are going to do it even if I try to stop you. Don’t worry



about it. There's nothing I can't do now."

In the end, Hyrkan caressed the situation instead of baring his teeth.

– Fighting.

Shir gave a cheer for Hyrkan. He let out a deep sigh at her words.

This was how the call came to an end.

The Dragon, which had been circling the sky, was incrementally getting closer to the ground.

At the same time, the Dragon's tail descended towards the ground. The lowered tail would reach Hyrkan in couple of minutes.

Hyrkan clenched his two fists as he looked at the Dragon.

'This is it.'

This was the final battle. It didn't matter if he won or lost. He would leave Warlord after this. He already gave his announcement to the public. If he won, he'll retire. Even if he lost, he'll give up on Warlord, and he would retire.



‘I’ll probably be too embarrassed to come back.’

He couldn’t go back on his words. Hyrkan had already given his announcement. He would feel too much shame if he went back on his words.

Of course, he had no regrets.

‘Yes. I have put an end to this long relationship. It isn’t as if I can always devote my life to Warlord.’

Hyrkan actually felt relieved.

From the time before he came back to the past and afterwards, his life had been intertwined with Warlord. Thanks to Warlord, he had lived through difficult times. On the other hand, Warlord now allowed him to prosper in life.

He had shared the good times and the bad times with Warlord. He had experienced all sorts of emotions. Now it was time to let it go. There was no game in this world that could be played forever. Everything in this world had a start and an end. An end was needed to start a new beginning.

Hyrkan stood up from his seat.

The Skeletons’ gaze moved in sync with Hyrkan’s movement.



Until a moment ago, his Skeleton Warriors, Knights and Death Knight had fought against the warriors controlled by the Dragon. The signs of battle was all over their bodies.

‘Ah.’

Hyrkan hesitated for a brief moment as he looked at the wounds they received from the fight.

“Ah.”

He stopped for a brief moment to look at them.

Hyrkan unconsciously raised his hand towards the nearest Skeleton Warrior.

Ssoo-oohk!

The Skeleton Warrior quickly dodged the hand.

Hyrkan let out a bitter laugh when he saw the Skeleton Warrior’s action. Hyrkan once again extended his hand in a swift manner. The Skeleton Warrior tried hard to dodge the hand, but at a certain point, Hyrkan had grabbed the head of the Skeleton Warrior.

After grabbing the head of the Skeleton Warrior, Hyrkan brought his head towards it.



“Thank you for everything.”

Toohk…… Toohk…….

“In many ways, you guys met a strange owner. Still, I was able to reach this point, because of you all.”

Hyrkan lightly and gently knocked heads with the Skeleton Warrior’s skull.

“This is goodbye.”

After he spoke his words, Hyrkan took off his Hahoe Mask. He had revealed his face to the world.

Soon, the world will know his face through the Stormhunter’s live channel.

‘Goodbye Skeletons and the Hahoe Mask.’

The world would remember the Hahoe Mask Hyrkan. However, now they would remember Ahn-jaehyun, who was the Hahoe Mask Hyrkan.

“Let’s end this.”



Hyrkan put an end to the very long relationship he had with the Hahoe Mask.

3.

“I want 10 dollar worth of lottery ticket with random draw.”

The part time worker had been watching a video on his tablet. He paused the video before he calculated the customer’s order.

As the customer ordered, he printed out a lottery ticket as he let the machine pick random numbers. Then he scanned the barcode of the customer’s other item.

“Since this is a beef gimbap.... The total is 15 dollars.”

“Here.”

“Yes. Thank y…….”

He saw a 50 dollar bill in front of his eyes, so the part time worker naturally raised his eyes to look at the customer. The customer was rail thin, and he was wearing thick glasses. Overall, he looked like a pushover. The customer looked like someone that will fall for any deceit.

‘Huh?’



At that moment, the convenience store's part timer felt as if he had seen this person before.

This was why he asked a question.

“Have I met you before from somewhere?”

Instead of answering, the customer's brows furrowed a little bit.

The part timer thought he had overstepped his bounds, so he quickly gave the customer his change and the lottery ticket.

The customer exited the convenience store, and the part timer started up the video on his tablet again.

– Uh? Hahoe Mask! The Hahoe Mask took off his Hahoe Mask!

“Ah!”

At that moment, the part time worker stood up from his seat in shock. Then he looked out the window. He saw the customer get into a very sleek and new lamborghini. The part time worker yelled as he looked at the customer.

“My god. He's the Hahoe Mask Hyrkan, Ahn-jaehyun! This is crazy! I have to get his signature. A signature....”



The part timer tried to rush out, but the customer's car was already pulling out towards the road.

“Ah-oh!”

In the end, the part time worker had to give up on getting the signature.

“This is nuts. How could I not recognize the Hahoe Mask?”

He was an avid fan of the Hahoe Mask. He kicked himself for not recognizing the Hahoe Mask.

After his despair came to an end, he had a question.

‘Why did the Hahoe Mask buy a lottery ticket? He retired from Warlord, but didn't he make a lot of money? I thought he sold several million copies of his Frozen Kingdom episode.’

4.

He had his hands on the sleek handle of the lamborghini. He wore a Patek Philippe watch on his wrist, and he was oozing with presence.

What he wore and drove was much more expensive than a house.



Ahn-jaehyun opened the beef kimbap he purchased earlier, and he started chewing on a piece.

As he ate, he thought about the lottery numbers he had purchased.

‘I should have memorized the winning lottery number.’

“Fuck the IRS!”

At that moment, Ahn-jaehyun unconsciously let out a wail of despair.

Ahn-jaehyun replayed the conversation he had with the agents of the IRS.

“Mr. Ahn-jaehyun. You have evaded paying a significant amount of tax.”

“It wasn’t tax evasion.....”

When he retired from Warlord, Ahn-jaehyun did everything he couldn’t do before, because he had been playing Warlord. First, he bought and moved into the best penthouse apartment he could find. Then he bought a lamborghini in one lump sum. Afterwards, he slowly bought luxury items to fill up his newly purchased apartment.



Those were his happy days. He was so happy that he sometimes forgot to eat!

However, a dark cloud appeared above Ahn-jaehyun's happiness.

Ahn-jaehyun had made an enormous amount of money through Warlord. Moreover, he participated in some shady practices to pay less tax, and he had been caught by the IRS. Of course, Ahn-jaehyun hadn't known he had participated in a shady practice. The accountant he hired said everyone did it, and he would be an idiot if he didn't take advantage of it.

"We don't care about your situation, Mr. Ahn-jaehyun. Our role is to take back the exact amount you owe us in taxes."

Anyways, this problem exploded in his face. He had never dealt with IRS agents before, so he was at a loss as to what to do.

"You have two choices. We can do this by force. Or you can cooperate with us, and we can come to an agreement."

"I...I'll cooperate."

He decided to pay his taxes.

However, there was a problem. Ahn-jaehyun didn't have enough liquid assets to pay off the taxes in its entirety. The tax bill wasn't small.



In the end, the IRS took his cut of the profit in selling footages of Warlord. Moreover, they took his sponsorship money.

This was the reason behind his purchase of the lottery ticket.

“Shit.”

He purchased a lottery ticket every time Ahn-jaehyun ate beef kimbap and ramen. He prayed for a winning lottery ticket.

‘Should I go to Che-sulyun, and ask her to buy me some meat? Shit. I acted so bold in front of Che-sulyun, so how would I look if I asked her to buy me some meat? Ah, this is driving me nuts. I should have just kept my money. Why did I have to buy.....’

He wallowed in his pain and suffering as he chew on the beef kimbap.

At that moment, a call arrived.

“Receive incoming call!”

When Ahn-jaehyun yelled out, a hologram picture of a phone appeared in front of his eyes. The caller’s name also appeared.

The caller was Che-sulyun.



- Ahn-jaehyun. Tobot Soft officially announced their next project.

- There will be two version to the next project. One will be the light version where normal Users will be able to enjoy themselves. The other version is the Pro version. It is said that no one can beat it.

As soon as her words ended, he heard the voice of Tobi Gwynn. His voice filled the interior of Ahn-jaehyun's car.

- Was the Pro Version an attempt to dominate the rapidly growing VR eSports market?

- It was the same during the days of Warlord. Tobot Soft always strives to make that one special game. We make unique products. Our next project is a challenge we are putting out to the VR pro-gamers. I'll guarantee it. This game will be more difficult than any other game in the market.

- How difficult is it?

- Do you remember the Hahoe Mask's Skeletons?

- Of course, They are still legendary.

- We took the battle AI possessed by the Hahoe Mask's Skeletons,



and we strengthened it using the Deep Learning system. All the battle AI of monsters will be based on it. I'll guarantee it. This game will be burdensome even for the Hahoe Mask.

Tobi Gwynn's voice came to an end there.

– Ahn-jaehyun.

Che-sulyun's voice could be heard again.

“What?”

– The Stormhunter's next target is the sequel to Warlord. We've picked out our members. Of course, this will be the stage where you'll debut as a member of the Stormhunters.

At her words, Ahn-jaehyun had a smile on his face.

“Is that all you have to say to me?”

– That's all I have to say for now. However, I am curious about something.

“Speak.”

– You'll be meeting the Skeletons you grew and trained as an enemy. How do you feel about it? You've never fought against your



Skeletons before.

At her question, the smile on his face was wiped away.

‘Wait a moment.’

After receiving the question, Ahn-jaehyun seriously mulled over it. As he thought more on it, Ahn-jaehyun’s expression crumpled.

“It’ll be a damn annoying game. A really damn annoying game.... Shit. Can’t I just play a different game?

– You are the one, who signed the contract. Of course, you can pay the penalty to get out of the contract. Do you have that kind of money?

At her words, Ahn-jaehyun let out a sigh as he spoke.

“Anyways, does our guild do any company dinners? Shouldn’t we do a regular get-together in a barbeque restaurant?”

However, there was no answer to his questions. She had already ended the call.

Ahn-jaehyun, who had his hands on the handle, glanced at his Patek Philippe watch.